This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

38.
425.

MEMORIALS

OF

A RESIDENCE ON THE CONTINENT,

AND

HISTORICAL POEMS.

MEMORIALS

OF

A RESIDENCE ON THE CONTINENT,

AND

HISTORICAL POEMS.

MEMORIALS

OF

A RESIDENCE ON THE CONTINENT,

AND

Historical Poems.

BY

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES,

AUTHOR OF

"MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN GREECE."

LONDON:
EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.

MDCCCXXXVIII.

425.

BRADBURY AND EVANS,
PRINTERS-EXTRAORDINARY TO THE QUEEN,
WHITEFRIARS.

TO

THE VISCOUNTESS GALWAY.

My dear Sister,

It is a custom of that graceful people among whom we have lived so long, to accompany the nuptials of their relations and friends with the dedication of some literary record,—some memorial of a nature more permanent or reproductive than can belong to other tokens of courtesy and regard.

On this solemn celebration I do not know what more becoming offering I could make to you than these Poems, the greater part of which refer to that

period and that country, to what we there have seen, to what we there have felt together,—to those common thoughts which we should be unwilling, if not unable, to apportion,—to those sympathies, of which we cannot tell the links, even when most conscious of the chain.

Let, then, these echoes harmonize with the tones of prayer and benediction; let memory minister to hope for the progress and accomplishment of your happiness.

And, in truth, how naturally do such mingled feelings grow up and cluster about your marriage-altar! for your present destiny is rather the ripening of familiar affections, than any sudden change and transference of the relations of life and love; your new home will be peopled with old associations, and your children may stand around the hearth where you, in your childhood, played.

For those, whose days are thus bound together in filial succession of reverence and delight, the worst conditions of humanity are overruled, and time has taken something of the being of eternity.

Be of thankful heart, then, my dearest sister, for this and all other blessings,—for happiness enjoyed and happiness awaited,—for the love you have dispenst and the love you have won,—and, above all, for the power that is in you to fulfil the Christian ideal—to live in joy and peace, forgetting not the unhappy.

LONDON, APRIL 25TH, 1838.

PAGE

On the Mad-house at Venice 46

To ———. Written at Venice 48

Ode to the Moon of the South 55

PICTURES IN VERSE:—

I. The Virgin and Child, by Giov. Bellini . . . 62

II. The Martyrdom of St. Catherine, by V. Catena . . 65

III. Jesus and John contending for the Cross. By S. da Pesaro 69

IV. Christ's Descent into Purgatory. By Giorgione . . 73

To Giovanni Bellini 74

To Raffael 75

The Immortality of Rome 76

The Papal Benediction, from St. Peter's 81

The Illuminations of St. Peter's 85

The Fireworks from the Castle of St. Angelo . . . 88

On the Marriage of the Lady Gwendolin Talbot to the eldest Son of the Prince Borghese 89

Roman Ruins 90

On a Scene in Tuscany 91

To Walter Savage Landor, aged nine years . . . 92

An Italian to Italy 95

On leaving Italy for the Summer, on account of health . . 101

Switzerland and Italy 104

On the Church of the Madaleine, at Paris 107

Impression, on returning to England 110

WRITTEN IN IRELAND :—

PAGE

Clifden, in Cunnemara 111

The Subterranean River at Cong 115

"One Moment more before that fatal Leap" . . . 117

Valentia. A Fragment 118

HISTORICAL POEMS :—

Saul and David 124

Decius Brutus, on the Coast of Portugal . . . 132

The Death of Almanzor 139

The Departure of St. Patrick from Scotland . . . 143

Charlemagne and the Hymn of Christ 152

The Beggar's Castle 160

Though blank the range of place and fact
To hearts that only rise and fall,
God and the Poet can extract
Beauty and Truth from each and all.

MEMORIALS

OF A

RESIDENCE ON THE CONTINENT.

THE DEATH OF DAY.

WRITTEN ON THE RHINE.

FULL of hours, the Day is falling
Where its brethren lie,—
A stern and royal voice is calling
The beautiful to die.

The banners of the west
A splendid breadth unfold,—
Their glory be unblest!
There is blood upon the gold.

Great Time, how canst thou slay,
With such a fune'ral state,
The gay and gentle Day,
Whom none could fear or hate?

Oh! mark him on his bed,
How flusht his quiet cheek,
How lowly droops his head,
And eyes that more than speak.

Let not the giddy breeze
Make sport of his last moans;
Weave them, ye aged trees,
Into Æolian tones.

The hills, in clear outline,
Against the blanching sky,
Stand forth, nor seem to pine
For' the joy that' is passing by

But solemnly and boldly
They bid a sad farewell,
Nor feel the pain more coldly
They are too proud to tell.

All leaves and blossoms pray
One deep and constant prayer:
"Take him not all away,
That made us seem so fair;

" Say not, that, in its turn,
'T is pleasant to behold
The lamp of darkness burn
Light-amber or red-gold;

" Praise not the coming night,
Its damp and sallow ray,
We would not call it bright,
Tho' it came not after Day.

" We' have wept when Day was sighing,—
His gloom has made us mourn,—
And now our love is dying,
What care we for the born?"

ON A RUINED CASTLE,

NEAR THE RHINE.

THIS was a fortress, firm and stout,
When there was battling round about,—
It has been deckt in gala-plight,
In days of ladie-love and knight,—
It' has known carouse and Provençal song,
And the dance right featly tript along,
While' the red yuhl-log and wassail bowl
Cheered the pilgrim's thirsty soul.
The swoop of Time has been to it
A bounty and a benefit,—
It has gained glory from those wings,
Which have annihilated Kings;
And now it stands in its massiveness,
Wi' the scars of many an age,
Like a lore-encumbered prophetess,
Who' has worn away her youthfulness,
In studies deep and sage.

I LOVE the Forest;—I could dwell among
That silent people, till my thoughts up-grew
In nobly-ordered form, as to my view
Rose the succession of that lofty throng:—
The mellow footstep on a ground of leaves
Formed by the slow decay of nume'rous years,—
The couch of moss, whose growth alone appears,
Beneath the fir's inhospitable eaves,—
The chirp and flutter of some single bird,—
The rustle in the brake,—what precious store
Of joys have these on Poets' hearts conferred?
And then at times to send one's own voice out,
In the full frolic of *one* startling shout,
Only to feel the after-stillness more!

THE BOY ROBERT.

FROM THE GERMAN OF ARNDT.

The stripling Robert, good and brave,
Holds in his hand a bare-drawn glaive,
And on the altar of the Lord,
He lays it with this earnest word:

"I swear to thee, O fatherland!
With naked sword in clenchèd hand,
On this thy consecrated shrine,
Still to the death to be sincerely thine.

"I swear with heart and mind to be
Thy honest servant, Liberty!
Body and soul, through all life's span,
For thou art the sublimest good of Man.

" I swear a bloody, burning, hate,
And scorn, whose depth can ne'er abate,
To Gallic guile and Gallic band,
That they may never shame our German land.

" And Thou, whose high coercing sway
Heaven's Suns and earthly hearts obey,
Thou mighty God! stand by my oath,
Be thou the guardian of my faithful troth.

" That I, from lie and treache'ry pure,
May be thy Lieger true and sure,—
And that this brand may never pause
In the high duty of a righteous cause.

" And if against my fatherland
And God I draw it, then this hand
Be dust, this arm be withered cold,
And be this hilt a hundred-weight to hold!"

Oh! no, oh! no, for ever no!
No caitiff thought will Robert know,—
To God the Lord this oath is given,
Honour and Virtue lighten him to heaven.

ON THE JUNGFRAU,

BY MOONLIGHT.

THE maiden moon is resting
The maiden mount above,
They gaze upon each other,
With cold majestic love.

So I and Thou, sweet sister,
Upon each other gaze,
Our love was warm, but sorrow
Has shorn it of its rays.

As in the hazy heav'n
That gentle Orb appears,
Thou lookest in my face,
Tearful,—not shedding tears.

Like thine, her face is pale,
But from within a light,
Mild-gleaming as thy spirit,
Comes out upon the night,

And casts a tender sheen
On that pale hill beneath,
Pale ! as my heart, which wears
The dull-white hue of Death.

MONT BLANC.

Mount! I have watcht thee, at the fall of dew,
Array thee in thy panoply of gold,—
And then cast over it thy rosy vest,—
And last that awful robe that looks so cold,
Thy ghastly spectre-dress of nameless hue:
Then thou art least of earth, and then I love thee best.

WRITTEN IN THE MOUNTAINS OF THE TYROL.

A Heart the world of men had bound and sealed
With shameful stamp and miserable chain,
Here, mother Nature, is to Thee revealed,
Open to Thee; oh! be it not in vain.
Flow over it, ye Torrents,—though I fear,
That be your course as fierce as e'er it may,
The sorrow-stains engrained there many a year
Your force can never, never, wash away:
Then come, ye Mountains, ye half-heavenly Forms,
Based in deep lakes and woods, and crowned with storms,
Close on it,—cover,—seal it up again,
But with the signet of your own pure power,
So that unbroken, till the' all-searching hour
Of Death, that impress may on it remain.

In the treasury of the Benedictine Monastery of St. Peter at Salzburg, I was shown a gold and jewel-studded pen with which every brother, on his entrance into the order, signed his name. This had been the custom for many centuries.

MS. Journal.

This dainty instrument, this table-toy,
Might seem best fitted for the use and joy
Of some high Ladie in old gallant times,
Or gay-learned weaver of Provençal rhymes:
With such a pen did sweet Francesca trace
Some hurried lines beneath her blushing face,
And hid them in her lover's doublet-sleeve,
To let him know, that, ere to-morrow eve,
They would enjoy the luscious summer-weather,
And read their favo'rite Launcelot together;
With such a pen did tremu'lous Mary write
To bid good Chat'elet come and play to-night;
And so we might go on for hours, and fold
Our colo'ring fancies round this antient gold;

But here one stern Reality appears,
And leaves no place for other dreams or tears,—
The simple record, that, with this one pen,
Have hundreds of our brothers, fellow-men,
Signed by their names the awfullest decree
That between them and all the world could be;
Those few small letters, when thus written, said—
" The writer, though he live, is living dead;
" The world of man, of beauty, and of bloom,
" This visi'ble earth, but serves him for a tomb,—
" He feels no more its glories or its gains,
" His soul can only know its purging pains,—
" Here from the trails of sin however sure,
" He needs that suffe'ring to be perfect-pure."
Think of the fingers that have dared to hold
This fateful relic! Some with grasp so bold,
You would believe that nothing but the pride
Of glory won, ambition satisfied,
Or joy of meed long-toiled for, could command
Such full composure in an aged hand:
And yet the most of those, who hither brought
Their Being's sacrifice were men well taught
In the world's wisdom, men who had lived through
All that life gives to suffer and to do;

Who had grown old in wars of spi'rit and arm,
But found in Victo'ry no victorious charm
Against the clouding armament of Ill,
Licenst on earth by God's unsounded will.
Some might be young,—by strange heart-prescience led
To know that Life is but a sick-man's bed,
On which, with aching head and limbs, we lie
Through the hot Night of our humanity,
Waiting for Death, our Lucifer,—so blest
Is he, through whose deep-drugged and senseless rest
No Dreams can pierce,—and thus they did but crave
To seek this stupor in the cloiste'ral grave ;
These held the Pen, as valor holds a sword
Against the foe that doubted of its word ;
Yet others still might be,—young too and fair,
Strong too, but only strengthened by Despair,
Who,—when that closing moment came at last,
That one thin line, which lay between the past
And the unknown bleak Future,—that deep trench,
Which now leapt over, by a fearful wrench
Of all most natu'ral instincts, held the soul,
Once the world's freeman, once without controul
Working and wande'ring, bound to a new law,
Captive in Faith and prisoner in Awe,—

Caught up this Pen, and quiveringly traced
The names, that thence could never be effaced,
With moveless eyes and pale-blue lips convulst,
As if the salient blood were all repulst
To its free source,—as if within their clutch
They had a poisoned dagger, and its touch
Was on their living flesh ;—yet they, even they,
Found in these precincts Joy, we will not say,
But, what is better, Peace ;—they askt no more ;
Happy the wave that breaks upon the shore !

THE RIVER TRAUN.

WRITTEN IN LOMBARDY.

The Traun rises in the mountains of Upper Austria, and loses itself in the Danube above Linz. Its course is remarkable for the combination of the best features of Alpine scenery with the grace and elegance of the Southern landskip.

My heart is in a mountain mood,
Though I am bound to tread the plain,
She will away for ill or good,—
I cannot lure her back again;
So let her go,—God speed her flight
O'er racy glebe and columned town,
I know that she will rest e'er night,
By the remembered banks of Traun.

And she will pray her sister Muse,
Sister, companion, friend, and guide,
Her every art and grace to use,
For love of that well-cherisht tide;
But words are weak,—she cannot reach
By such poor steps that Beauty's crown;
How can the Muse to *others* teach
What were to me the banks of Traun?

She can repeat the faithful tale
That "where thy genial waters flow,
"All objects the rare crystal hail,
"And cast their voices far below;
"And there the stedfast echoes rest,
"Till the old Sun himself goes down,
"Till darkness falls on every breast,
"Even on thine, transparent Traun."

And she can say, "Where'er thou art,
"Brawling 'mid rocks, or calm-embayed,
"Outpouring thy abundant heart
"In ample lake or deep cascade,—
"Whatever dress thy sides adorn,
"Fresh-dewy leaves or fir-stems brown,
"Or ruby-dripping barbe'ry-thorn,
"Thou art thyself, delightful Traun!

" No glacier-mountains, harshly bold,
" Whose peaks disturb the summer air,
" And make the gentle blue so cold,
" And hurt our warmest thoughts, are there;
" But upland meadows, lush with rills,
" Soft-green as is the love-bird's down,
" And quaintest forms of pine-clad hills,
" Are thy fit setting, jewelled Traun!"

But the wise Muse need not be told,
Though fair and just her song may seem,
The same has oft been sung of old,
Of many' a less deserving stream;
For where would be the worth of sight,
If Love could feed on blank renown?
They who have loved the Traun aright,
Have sat beside the banks of Traun.

WRITTEN IN PETRARCH'S HOUSE AT ARQUA,

AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS.

PETRARCH! I would that there might be
In this thy household sanctuary
No visi'ble monument of thee:

The fount that whilom played before thee,
The roof that rose in shelter o'er thee,
The low fair hills that still adore thee,—

I would no more; thy memory
Must loathe all cold reality,
Thought-worship only is for thee.

They say thy tomb lies there below;
What want I with the marble show?
I am content,—I will not go:

For though by Poesy's high grace
Thou sawe'st, in thy calm resting-place,
God, Love, and Nature face to face;

Yet now that thou art wholly free,
How can it give delight to see
That sign of thy captivity?

FEELINGS EXCITED BY SOME MILITARY MANŒUVRES AT VERONA.

—•—

What is the lesson I have brought away,
After the moment's palpitating glee?
What has this pomp of men, this strong array
Of thousands and ten thousands been to me?
Did I find nothing but the vision gay,
The mere phenomenon that all could see?
Did I feel nothing but the brute display
Of Power,—the show of centred energy?
Trembling and humbled, I was taught how hard
It is for our strait minds at once to scan
The might of banded numbers, and regard
The individual soul, the living Man;
To use mechanic multitudes, and yet
Our common human feelings not forget!

MEDITATIVE FRAGMENTS, ON VENICE.

I.

The ruler of the Adriatic, who never was infant nor stripling, whom God took by the right hand and taught to walk by himself the first hour.

LANDOR.

WALK in St. Mark's, the time the ample space
Lies in the freshness of the evening shade,
When, on each side, with gravely-darkened face
The masses rise above the light arcade;
Walk down the midst with slowly-tunéd pace,
But gay withal,—for there is high parade
Of fair attire and fairer forms, which pass
Like varying groups on a magician's glass.

From broad-illumined chambers far within,
Or under curtains daintily outspread,
Music, and laugh, and talk, the motley din
Of all who from sad thought or toil are sped,
Here a chance hour of social joy to win,
Gush forth,—but *I* love best, above my head
To feel nor arch nor tent, nor anything
But that pure Heaven's eternal covering.

It is one broad Saloon, one gorgeous Hall;
A chamber, where a multitude, all Kings,
May hold full audience, splendid festival,
Or Piety's most pompous ministerings;
Thus be its highth unmarred,—thus be it all
One mighty room, whose form direct upsprings
To the o'er-arching sky;—it is right good,
When Art and Nature keep such brotherhood.

For where, upon the firmest sodden land,
Has ever Monarch's power and toil of slaves
Equalled the works of that self-governed band,
Who fixt the Delos of the Adrian waves;
Planting upon these strips of yielding sand
A Temple of the Beautiful, which braves
The jealous strokes of ocean, nor yet fears
The far more peri'lous sea, "whose waves are years?".

Walk in St. Mark's again, some few hours after,
When a bright sleep is on each storied pile,—
When fitful music, and inconstant laughter,
Give place to Nature's silent moonlight smile:
Now Fancy wants no faery gale to waft her
To Magian haunt, or charm-engirded isle,
All too content, in passive bliss, to see
This show divine of visi'ble Poetry:—

On such a night as this impassionedly
The old Venetian sung those verses rare,
"That Venice must of needs eternal be,
For Heaven had lookt through the pellucid air,
And cast its reflex in the crystal sea,
And Venice was the image pictured there *;"
I hear them now, and tremble, for I seem
As treading on an unsubstantial dream.

Who talks of vanisht glory, of dead power,
Of things that were, and are not? Is he here?
Can he take in the glory of this hour,
And call it all the decking of a bier?

* Ich hörte einen blinden Sänger in Chioggia, der sang, Venedig sey eine ewige Stadt; der Himmel hätte sich im Meer gespiegelt und sein Widerschein wäre Venedig. GRAF VON PLATEN.

No, surely as on that Titanic tower *
The Guardian Angel stands in æther clear,
With the moon's silver tempe'ring his gold wing,
So Venice lives, as lives no other thing:—

That strange Cathedral! exquisitely strange,—
That front, on whose bright varied tints the eye
Rests as of gems,—those arches, whose high range
Gives its rich-broidered border to the sky,—
Those ever-prancing steeds!—My friend, whom change
Of restless will has led to lands that lie
Deep in the East, does not thy fancy set
Above those domes an airy minaret?

Dost thou not feel, that in this scene are blent
Wide distances of the estrangèd earth,
Far thoughts, far faiths, beseeming her who bent
The spacious Orient to her simple worth,
Who, in her own young freedom eminent,
Scorning the slaves that shamed their antient birth,
And feeling what the West, could be, had been,
Went out a Trave'ller, and returned a Queen?

* The Campanile.

II.

The Golden Book *
Is now unwritten in, and stands unmoved,
Save when the curious traveller takes down
A random volume, from the dusty shelf,
To trace the progress of a bruited name;
The Bucentaur
Is shattered, and of its resplendent form
There is no remnant, but some splintered morsel,
Which in his cabin, as a talisman,
Mournfully hangs the pious Gondolier;
The Adrian sea
Will never have a Doge to marry more,—
The meagre favors of a forein lord
Can hardly lead some score of humble craft
With vilest merchandize into the port,
That whilom held the wealth of half a world.
Thy palaces
Are bartered to the careful Israelite,—
Or left to perish, stone by stone, worn down

* The Libro d' Oro, the Venetian "Peerage."

In desolation,—solemn skeletons,
Whose nakedness some tufts of pitying grass,
Or green boughs trembling o'er the trembling wall,
Adorn but hide not.
And are these things true,
Miracu'lous Venice? Is the charm then past
Away from thee? Is all thy work fulfilled
Of power and beauty? Art thou gatherèd
To the dead cities? Is thy ministry
Made up, and folded in the hand of Thought?
Ask him who knows the meaning and the truth
Of all existence;—ask the Poet's heart:
Thy Book has no dead tome for him,—for him,
Within St. Mark's emblazoned porticoes,
Thy old nobility are walking still;—
The lowliest gondola upon thy waters
Is worth to him thy decorated galley;
He never looks upon the Adrian sea
But as thy lawful tho' too faithless spouse;
And when, in the sad lustre of the moon,
Thy palaces seem beautifully wan,
He blesses God that there is left on earth
So marvellous, so full, an antidote,
For all the racks and toils of mortal life,
As thy sweet countenance to gaze upon.

III.

L I D O.

I WENT to greet the full May-moon
On that long narrow shoal
Which lies between the still Lagoon
And the' open Ocean's roll.

How pleasant was that grassy shore,
When one for months had been
Shut up in streets,—to feel once more
One's footfall on the green!

There are thick trees too in that place;
But straight from sea to sea,
Over a rough uncultured space,
The path goes drearily.

I past along, with many a bound,
To hail the fresh free wave;
But, pausing, wonderingly found
I' was treading on a grave.

Then, at one careless look, I saw
That, for some distance round,
Tomb-stones, without design or law,
Were scattered on the ground:

Of pirates or of mariners
I deemed that these might be
The fitly-chosen sepulchres,
Encircled by the sea.

But there were words inscribed on all,
I' the tongue of a far land,
And marks of things symbolical,
I could not understand.

They are the graves of that sad race,
Who, from their Syrian home,
For ages, without resting-place,
Are doomed in woe to roam;

Who, in the days of sternest faith,
Glutted the sword and flame,
As if a taint of moral death
Were in their very name:

And even under laws most mild,
All shame was deemed their due,
And the nurse told the Christian child
To shun the cursèd Jew.

Thus all their gold's insidious grace
Availed not here to gain,
For their last sleep, a seemlier place
Than this bleak-featured plain.

Apart, severely separate,
On' the verge of the' outer sea,
Their home of Death is desolate
As their Life's home could be.

The common sand-path had defaced
And prest down many a stone;
Others can be but faintly traced
I' the rank grass o'er them grown.

I thought of Shylock,—the fierce heart
Whose wrongs and inju'ries old
Temper, in Shakspeare's world of Art,
His lusts of blood and gold;

Perchance that form of broken pride
Here at my feet once lay,—
But lay alone,—for at his side
There was no Jessica!

Fondly I love each island-shore,
Embraced by Adrian waves;
But none has Memo'ry cherisht more
Than Lido and its graves.

IV.

Oh Poverty! thou bitter-hearted fiend!
How darest thou approach the Beautiful?
How darest thou give up these palaces,
Where deli'cate Art in wood and marble wove
Its noblest fancies, with laborious skill,
To the base uses of the artizan?
How darest thou defile with coarsest stores,
And vermin's loathsome nests, the aged walls,
Whence Titian's women burningly looked down
On the rich-vested pomp that shone below?
Is nothing sacred for thy hand, no names,
No memories,—thou bold Iniquity!
Shall men, on whose fine brows we recognize
The lines of some great ducal effigies,
Which frown along St. John's cathedral aisles*,
With hearts as high as any of their fathers,
Sink silent under thy slow martyrdom,

* The Venetian Pantheon of S. Giovanni e Paolo.

Leaving their children, Liberty's just heirs,
Children like those that Gianbellini painted*,
To batten on the miserable alms,
The sordid fragments of their country's wealth,
Doled out by servants of a stranger king?
Is there no engine of compassionate Death,
Which with a rapid mercy will relieve
This antient city of its shamèd being?
Is War so weary that he cannot strike
One iron blow, that she may fold her robe
About her head, and fall imperially?
Is there no eager earthquake far below,
To shiver her frail limbs, and hurl her down,
Into the bosom of her mated sea?
Or must she, for a lapse of wretched years,
Armless and heartless, tremble on as now,
Like one who hears the tramp of murderous foes,
Unseen, and feels them nearer, nearer, still;—
Till round her Famine's pestilential breath,
Fatally closing, to the gloom of Time,
She shall, in quive'ring agony, give up
The spirit of that light, which burnt so long,
A steadfast glory, an unfailing fire?

* E. G. In the refectories of the Redentore and Frari.

Thus ran the darkling current of my thoughts,
As one sad night, from the Rialto's edge,
I lookt into the waters,—on whose face
Glimmered the reflex of some few faint stars,
And two far-flitting lamps of gondoliers,
That seemed on that black flat to move alone,
While, on each side, each well-known building lost
Its sepa'rate beauty in one dark long curve.

V.

City, whose name did once adorn the world,
Thou mightst have been all that thou ever wert,
In form and feature and material strength,
Up from the sea, which is thy pedestal,
Unto thy Campanile's golden top,
And yet have never won the precious crown,
To be the loved of human hearts, to be
The wise man's treasure now and evermore.—
The' ingenious boldness, the creative will,
Which from some weak uncertain plots of sand,
Cast up among the waters, could erect
Foundations firm as on the central ground,—
The art which changed thy huts to palaces,
And bade the God of Ocean's temples rise
Conspicuous far above the crystal plain,—
The ever-active nerve of Industry,
That bound the Orient to the Occident

In fruitful commerce, till thy lap was filled
With wealth, the while thy head was girt with power,—
Each have their sepa'rate palm from wonde'ring men;
But the sage thinker's passion must have source
In sympathy entire with that rare spirit
Which did possess thee, as thy very life,—
That power of union and self-sacrifice,
Which from the proud republics of old time
Devolved upon thee, by a perfect faith
Strung to a tenfold deeper energy.
Within thy people's mind immutable
Two notions held associate monarchy,
Religion and the state,—to which alone
In their full freedom, they declared themselves
Subject, and deemed this willing servitude
Their dearest privilege of liberty.
Thus at the call of either sacred cause,
All wealth, all feelings, all peculiar rights,
Were made one universal holocaust,
Without a thought of pain,—thus all thy sons
Bore thee a love, not vague and hard defined,
But close and personal, a love no force
Could take away, no coldness could assuage.
Thus when the noble body' of Italy,
Which God has bound in one by Alps and sea,

Was struggling with torn heart and splintered limbs,
So that the very marrow of her strength
Mixt with the lavisht gore and oozed away,—
Town banded against town, street against street,
House against house, and father against son,
The servile victims of unmeaning feuds,—
Thou didst sustain the wholeness of thy power,—
Thy altar was as a domestic hearth,
Round which thy children sat in brotherhood;—
Never was name of Guelf or Ghibelline
Writ on thy front in letters of bright blood;
Never the stranger, for his own base ends,
Flattered thy passions, or by proffered gold
Seduced the meanest of thy citizens.—
Thus too the very suffe'rers of thy wrath,
Whom the unsparing prudence of the state,
For erring judgment, insufficient zeal,
Or heavier fault, had banisht from its breast,
Ev'en they, when came on thee thy hour of need,
Fell at thy feet and prayed, with humble tears,
That thou wouldst deign at least to use their wealth,
Though thou didst scorn the gift of their poor lives*.

* As in the instance of Antonio Grimani, who was living in exile at Rome at the time of the league of Cambray. He had been condemned for some error in fighting against the Turks. When Venice was in distress, he offered all his private fortune to the state. After her victory he was not only recalled, but elected Doge some years later.

* * * * * *

Prime model of a Christian commonwealth!
Thou wise simplicity, which present men
Calumniate, not conceiving,—joy is mine,
That I have read and learnt thee as I ought,
Not in the crude compiler's painted shell,
But in thine own memorials of live stone,
And in the pictures of thy kneeling princes,
And in the lofty words on lofty tombs,
And in the breath of antient chroniclers,
And in the music of the outer sea.

THE VENETIAN SERENADE.

When along the light ripple the far serenade
Has accosted the ear of each passionate maid,
She may open the window that looks on the stream,—
She may smile on her pillow and blend it in dream;
Half in words, half in music, it pierces the gloom,
"I am coming—Stalì—but you know not for whom!
Stalì—not for whom!"

Now the tones become clearer,—you hear more and more
How the water divided returns on the oar,—
Does the prow of the gondola strike on the stair?
Do the voices and instruments pause and prepare?
Oh! they faint on the ear as the lamp on the view,
"I am passing—Premì—but I stay not for you!
Premì—not for you!"

Then return to your couch, you who stifle a tear,—
Then awake not, fair sleeper—believe he is here;
For the young and the loving no sorrow endures,
If to-day be another's, to-morrow is yours;—
May, the next time you listen, your fancy be true,
"I am coming—Sciàr—and for you and to you!
Sciàr—and to you!"

The Venetian words here used are the calls of the gondoliers, derived from the verbs Stalire, to go to the left, Premire, to go to the right, and Sciare, to stop the boat by turning the flat part of the oar against the current.

FROM GÖTHE.

Let me this gondola boat compare to the slumberous cradle,
And to a spacious bier liken the cover demure;
Thus on the open canal through life we are swaying and swimming
Onward with never a care, coffin and cradle between.

A DREAM IN A GONDOLA.

I HAD a dream of waters: I was borne
Fast down the slimy tide
Of eldest Nile, and endless flats forlorn
Strecht out on either side,—
Save where from time to time arose
Red pyramids, like flames in forced repose,
And Sphynxes gazed, vast countenances bland,
Athwart that river-sea and sea of sand.

It is the nature of the Life of Dream,
To make all action of our mental springs,
Howe'er unnatu'ral, discrepant and strange,
Be as the' unfolding of most usual things;
And thus to me no wonder did there seem,
When, by a subtle change,

The heavy ample byblus-wingèd boat,
In which I lay afloat,
Became a deft canoe, light-wove
Of painted bark, gay-set with lustrous shells,
Faintingly rockt within a lonesome cove,
Of some rich island where the Indian dwells;
Below, the water's pure-white light
Took color from reflected blooms,
And, through the forest's deepe'ning glooms,
Birds of illuminated plumes
Came out like stars in summer-night:
And close beside, all fearless and serene,
Within a niche of drooping green,
A girl, with limbs fine-rounded and clear-brown,
And hair thick-waving down,
Advancing one small foot, in beauty stood,
Trying the temper of the lambent flood.

But on my spirit in that spicèd air
Embalmed, and in luxurious senses drowned,
Another change of sweet and fair
There past, and of the scene around
Nothing remained the same in sight or sound:
For now the Wande'rer of my dream
Was gliding down a fable-stream

Of long-dead Hellas, with much treasure
Of inworking thoughtful pleasure;
While the silver line meanders
Through the tall pink oleanders,
Through the wood of tufted rushes,
Through the arbute's ruby-bushes,
Voices of a happy hymn
Every moment grow less dim,
Till at last the slim caïque
(Hollowed from a single stem
Of a hill-brow's diadem)
Rests in a deep-dented creek
Myrtle-ambusht,—and above
Songs, the very breath of Love,
Stream from Temples reverend-old,
Porticos of Doric mould,
Snow-white islands of devotion,
Planted in the rose and gold
Of the evening's æther-ocean;—
O joyant Earth! belovèd Grecian sky!
O favored Wanderer—honored dreamer I!

Yet not less favored when awake,—for now,
Across my torpid brow

Swept a cool current of the young night's air,
With a sharp kiss, and there
Was I all clear awake,—drawn soft along
There in my own dear Gondola, among
The bright-eyed Venice isles,
Lit up in constant smiles.—
What had my thoughts and heart to do
With wild Egyptian bark, or frail canoe,
Or mythic skiff out of Saturnian days,
When I was there, with that rare scene to praise,
That Gondola to rest in and enjoy,
That actual bliss to taste without alloy?
Cradler of placid pleasures, deep delights,
Bosomer of the Poet's wearied mind,
Tempter from vulgar passions scorns and spites,
Enfolder of all feelings that be kind,—
Before our souls thy quiet motions spread,
In one great calm, one undivided plain,
Immediate joy, blest memo'ries of the dead,
And iris-tinted forms of hope's domain,
Child of the still Lagoons,
Open to every show
Of summer sunsets and autumnal moons,
Such as no other space of world can know,—

Dear Boat, that makest dear
Whatever thou com'st near,—
In thy repose still let me gently roam,
Still on thy couch of beauty find a home;
Still let me share thy comfortable peace
With all I have of dearest upon Earth,
Friend, mistress, sister; and when death's release
Shall call my spirit to another birth,
Would that I might thus lightly lapse away,
Alone,—by moonlight,—in a Gondola.

ON THE MAD-HOUSE AT VENICE.

I lookt and saw between us and the sun
A building on an island, such an one
As age to age might add, for uses vile,
A windowless, deformed, and dreary pile;
And on the top an open tower, where hung
A bell, which in the radiance swayed and swung,—
We could just hear its hoarse and iron tongue;
The broad sun sank behind it, and it tolled
In strong and black relief. "What we behold
Shall be the Madhouse and its belfry tower,"
Said Maddalo. SHELLEY.

HONOR aright the philosophic thought,
That they who, by the trouble of the brain
Or heart, for usual life are overwrought,
Hither should come to discipline their pain.
A single Convent on a shoaly plain
Of waters never changing their dull face
But by the sparkles of thick-falling rain
Or lines of puny waves,—such is the place.

Strong medi'cine enters by the ear and eye ;
That low unalte'ring dash against the wall
May lull the angriest dream to vacancy ;
And Melancholy, finding nothing strange
For her poor self to jar upon at all,
Frees her sad-centred thoughts, and gives them pleasant
range.

TO — — —

WRITTEN AT VENICE.

Not only through the golden haze
Of indistinct surprise,
With which the Ocean-bride displays
Her pomp to stranger eyes;—
Not with the fancy's flashing play,
The trave'ller's vulgar theme,
Where following objects chase away
The moment's dazzling dream;—

Not thus art thou content to see
The City of my love,—
Whose beauty is a thought to me
All mortal thoughts above;—
And pass in dull unseemly haste,
Nor sight nor spirit clear,
As if the first bewilde'ring taste
Were all the banquet here!

When the proud Sea, for Venice' sake,
Itself consents to wear
The semblance of a land-lockt lake,
Inviolably fair;
And, in the dalliance of her Isles,
Has levelled his strong waves,
Adoring her with tende'rer wiles,
Than his own pearly caves,—

Surely may *we* to simi'lar calm
Our noisy lives subdue,
And bare our bosoms to such balm
As God has given to few;
Surely may we delight to pause
On our care-goaded road,
Refuged from Time's most bitter laws
In this august abode.

Thou knowest this,—thou linge'rest here,
Rejoicing to remain;
The plashing oars fall on thy ear
Like a familiar strain;
No wheel prolongs its weary roll,
The Earth itself goes round
Slower than elsewhere, and thy soul
Dreams in the void of sound.

Thy heart, by Nature's discipline,
From all disdain refined,
Kept open to be written in
By good of every kind,
Can harmonize its inmost sense
To every outward tone,
And bring to all experience
High reaso'ning of its own.

So when these forms come freely out,
And wonder is gone by,
With patient skill it sets about
Its subtle work of joy;
Connecting all it comprehends
By lofty moods of love,—
The earthly Present's farthest ends,—
The Past's deep Heaven above.

O bliss! to watch, with half-shut lid,
By many a secret place,
Where darkling loveliness is hid,
And undistinguisht grace,—
To mark the gloom, by slow degrees,
Exfoliate, till the whole
Shines forth before our sympathies,
A soul that meets a soul!

Come out upon the broad Lagoon,
Come for the hundredth time,—
Our thoughts shall make a pleasant tune,
Our words a worthy rhyme;
And thickly round us we will set
Such visions as were seen,
By Tizian and by Tintorett,
And dear old Giambellin,—

And all their peers in art, whose eyes,
Taught by this sun and sea,
Flasht on their works those burning dyes,
That fervent poetry;
And wove the shades so thinly-clear
They would be parts of light
In northern climes, where frowns severe
Mar half the charms of sight.—

Did ever shape that Paolo drew
Put on such brilliant tire,
As Nature, in this evening view,—
This world of tinted fire?
The glory into whose embrace,
The virgin pants to rise,
Is but reflected from the face
Of these Venetian skies.

The sun, beneath the' horizon's brow
Has sunk, not past away;
His presence is far lordlier now
Than on the throne of day;
His spi'rit of splendor has gone forth,
Sloping wide violet rays,
Possessing air and sea and earth
With his essential blaze*.

Transpierced, transfused, each densest mass
Melts to as pure a glow,
As images on painted glass
Or silken screens can show.
Gaze on the city,—contemplate
With that fine sense of thine
The palace of the antient state,—
That wildly-grand design!

How 'mid the universal sheen
Of marble amber-tinged,
Like some enormous baldaquin
Gay-chequered and deep-fringed,

* The perfect transparency and rich color of all objects and their reflections, in southern countries, for some short time after sunset, has an almost miraculous effect to a northern eye. Whenever it has been imitated in art, it has been generally pronounced unnatural or exaggerated. I do not remember to have ever seen the phenomenon so astonishingly beautiful as at Venice, at least in Italy.

It stands in air and will not move,
Upheld by magic power,—
The dun-lead domes just caught above—
Beside,—the glooming tower.

Now a more distant beauty fills
Thy scope of ear and eye,—
That graceful cluster of low hills,
Bounding the western sky,
Which the ripe evening flushes cover
With purplest fruitage-bloom,—
Methinks that gold-lipt cloud may hover
Just over Petrarch's tomb!

Petrarch! when we that name repeat,
Its music seems to fall
Like distant bells, soft-voiced and sweet,
But sorrowful withal;—
That broken heart of love!—that life
Of tenderness and tears!
So weak on earth,—in earthly strife,—
So strong in holier spheres!

How in his most of godlike pride,
While emu'lous nations ran
To kiss his feet, he stept aside
And wept the woes of man!

How in his genius-woven bower
Of passion ever green,
The world's black veil fell, hour by hour,
Him and his rest between.

Welcome such thoughts;—they well atone
With this more serious mood
Of visi'ble things that night brings on,
In her cool shade to brood;
The moon is clear in heaven and sea,
Her silver has been long
Slow-changing to bright gold, but she
Deserves a sepa'rate song.

ODE

TO THE MOON OF THE SOUTH.

Let him go down,—the gallant Sun!
His work is nobly done;
Well may He now absorb
Within his solid orb
The rays so beautiful and strong,
The rays that have been out so long
Embracing this delighted land as with a mystic song.

Let the brave Sun go down to his repose,
And though his heart be kind,
He need not mourn for those
He leaves behind;
He knows, that when his ardent throne
Is rolled beyond the vaulting sky,
The Earth shall not be left alone
In darkness and perplexity.

We shall not sit in sullen sorrow
Expectant of a tardy morrow,
But there where he himself arose,
Another power shall rise,
And gracious rivalry disclose
To our reverted eyes,
Between the passing splendor and the born,
Which can the most our happy world adorn.

The light of night shall rise,—
Not as in northern skies,
A memo'ry of the day, a dream
Of sunshine, something that might seem
Between a shadow and a gleam,
A mystery, a maiden
Whose spirit worn and sorrow laden,
Pleasant imaginations wile
Into a visionary smile,
A novice veiled in vapo'ry shrouds,
A timid huntress, whom the clouds
Rather pursue than shun,—
With far another mien,
Wilt Thou come forth serene,
Thou full and perfect Queen,
Moon of the South! twin-sister of the Sun!

Still harbored in his tent of cloth of gold
He seems thy ordered presence to await,
In his pure soul rejoicing to behold
The majesty of his successor's state,—
Saluting thy ascent
With many' a tender and triumphant tone
Compast in his celestial instrument,
And harmonies of hue to other climes unknown.

He too, who knows what melody of word
May with that visual music best accord,
Why does the Bard his homage now delay?
As in the antient East,
The royal Minstrel-Priest
Sang to his harp that Hallelujah lay
Of the Sun-bridegroom ready for his way,
So, in the regions of the later West
This blessed even-tide,
Is there no Poet whose divine behest
Shall be to hail the bride?

A feeble voice may give an earnest sound,
And grateful hearts are measured not by power,
Therefore may I, tho' nameless and uncrowned,
Proffer a friendly tribute to thy dower.

For on the midland Sea I sailed of old,
Leading thy line of narrow rippled light,
And saw it grow a field of frosted gold,
With every boat a shadow in the Bright;
And many' a playful fancy has been mine,
As I have watcht the shapes thy glory made,
Glimpsing like starlight through the massive pine,
Or finely-trelliced by mimosa shade;
And now I trace each moment of thy spell,
That frees from mortal stain these Venice isles,
From eve's rich shield to morn's translucid shell,
From Love's young glow to Love's expiring smiles!

We gaze upon the faces we hold dear,
Each feature in thy rays as well defined,
As just a symbol of informing mind,
As when the noon is on them full and clear;
Yet all some wise attempered and subdued,
Not far from what to Faith's prospective eyes
Transfigured creatures of beatitude
From earthy graves arise.

Those evenings, oh! those evenings, when with one,
Then the world's loveliness, now wholly mine,
I stood beside the salient founts that shone
Fit frontispiece to Peter's Roman shrine;

I knew how fair were She and They
In every bright device of day,
All happy as a lark on wing,
A singing, gliste'ning, dancing thing,
With joy and grace that seemed to be
Of Nature's pure necessity;
But when, O holy Moon! thy might
Turned all the water into light,
And each enchanted Fountain wore
Diviner beauty than before,
A pillar of aspiring beams,
An ever-falling veil of gleams,—
She who in day's most lively hour
Had something of composing power
About her mirthful lips and eyes,—
Sweet folly making others wise,—
Was vested with a sudden sense
Of great and grave intelligence,
As if in thy reflex she saw
The process of eternal law,
God's conscious pleasure working out
Through all the Passion, Pain, and Doubt;—
And thus did She and Thou impart
Such knowledge to my liste'ning heart,
Such sympathies as word or pen
Can never tell again!

All spirits find themselves fulfilled in Thee,
The glad have triumph and the mourning balm:
Dear God! how wondrous that a thing should be
So very glorious and so very calm!
The lover, standing on a lonely height,
Rests his sad gaze upon the scene below,
Lapt in the trance of thy pervading glow,
Till pleasant tears obscure his pensive sight;
And in his bosom those long-smothered flames,
The scorching elements of vain desire,
Taking the nature of thy gentle fire,
Play round the heart in peace, while he exclaims,
"Surely my love is out somewhere to-night!"

Why art thou thus companionable? Why
Do we not love thy light alone, but Thee?
Is it that though thou art so pure and high,
Thou dost not shock our senses, as they be?
That our poor eyes rest on thee, and descry
Islands of earth within thy golden sea?
Or should the root be sought
In some unconscious thought,
That thy fine presence is not more thine own
Than are our soul's adorning splendors ours?—
Than are the energies and powers,

With which reflected light alone
Illuminates the living hours,
From our own wells of being brought,
From virtue self-infused or seed of life self-sown?
Thus with ascent more ready may we pass
From this delightful sharing of thy gifts
Up to the common Giver, Source, and Will;
And if, alas!
His daily affluent sun-light seldom lifts
To thankful ecstasy our hearts' dull mass,
It may be that our feeble sight
Will not confront the total light,
That we may love in nature frail
To blend the vivid with the pale,
The dazzling with the dim:
And lo! how God, all-gracious still
Our simplest fancies to fulfil,
Bids us, O Southern Moon, thy beauty hail,
In Thee rejoicing and adoring Him.

PICTURES IN VERSE.

I.

PICTURE BY GIOV. BELLINI, IN THE CHURCH OF THE REDENTORE AT VENICE.

THE VIRGIN.

Who am I, to be so far exalted
Over all the maidens of Judæa,
That here only in this lonely bosom
Is the wonder-work of God revealèd?
Oh! to think this little, little, infant,
Whose warm limbs upon my knees are resting,
Helpless, silent, with his tender eyelids,
Like two pearl-shells, delicately closèd,
Is informed with that eternal spirit,
Who, between the Cherubim enthronèd,
Dwells behind the Curtain of the Temple!

I can only gaze on him adoring,
Fearful lest the simple joy and passion
Which my mother-love awakes within me,
Be not something bold and too familiar
For this Child of Miracle and Glory.

TWO ANGELS.

(PLAYING ON INSTRUMENTS.)

We and the little cheerful goldfinch,
Percht above that blessèd seat,—
He above and we below,—
We with voices and sweet viols,
He with chirping voice alone,—
Glorify the happy Mother,
Glorify the holy Child.
Now that our great heavenly Master
Has put on this wondrous semblance
Of a humble mortal infant,
We, the Angels of his presence,
Are become as simple children,
And beside him watch, admiring
All his innocence and beauty,
Lulling him to downy slumbers
With remembrances of Heaven.

THE CHILD JESUS.

I SEEM to be asleep,—I seem to dream,—
But it is Ye, Children of fallen Man,
Who dream, not I. Though I am now come down,
Out of the Waking of Eternal Truth,
Here born into the miserable Dream
Of your poor Life, still I must ever wake,
For I am Love, and if ye follow me,
Ye too will wake;—I come to lead the way.

II.

THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. CATHERINE,

BY

VINCENZO CATENA, IN THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA MATER DOMINI, AT VENICE.

—•—

ST. CATHERINE.

(KNEELING.)

I KNEW, I knew it would be so,
That, in this long-expected hour,
Thou would'st not leave me, Christ my Lord!
My poor blind-hearted enemies
Have brought me here to die,—ev'en here,
In this my old delight, the Lake
Of dear Bolsena; they have tied
About my weak and slender neck
A ponde'rous millstone, that my frame

May be dragged down to surest death
Within that undulating tomb.
The stone is there,—the cord is there,
But the gross weight I cannot feel,
For round me, even while I pray,
Beautiful-wingèd childly shapes
Are gathe'ring, smiling glorious smiles.
With what deep looks of sympathy
They dwell upon me! with what care
Some raise the cord, some raise the stone,
So that it cannot sway me down.
O my soul's lover! Saviour Christ!
I take this earnest of thy grace,
Assured that I shall lay aside
The coil of this tormented flesh,
Without a thought of fear or pain,—
That, when this mortal shell is cast
Into the stifling element,
That instrument of my distress
Will, at thy blessèd will, be changed
Into the very air of Heaven.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Sister Catherine, sweetest Sister,
Know you not from whom we come?
See, we kneel around you kneeling,
Offe'ring kind and loving duty,
All we can to soothe your suffe'ring,
All we can to make you glad!
Ah! we see you look with wonder,
That our small and tender hands
Can raise up this heavy stone,
Without show of pain or labour:
Do you believe then,
That, because our long gold hair,
And our rosy-rounded faces,
And our laughing lips and eyes,
And our baby-moulded limbs
Are like those of earthly children,
We have not the strength, the glory, and the power,
Which our Father gives unto his dear ones,—
Which he will give to you, most happy Catherine,
For you have loved him?

CHRIST.

(ABOVE, SPEAKING TO AN ANGEL.)

ANGEL! to thee is given the noble charge
To bear this martyr-mantle perfect-white
To my dear daughter Catherine there below;
That she, when clothed thus worthily, may pass
From the hard triumph of her prison-life
To the embraces of essential Love.

ANGEL.

(KNEELING, AND HOLDING THE MANTLE.)

BURNING with delight, I haste
This high mission to perform,—
But it is an awful task,
Even for an Angel's hands,
Such a power of God to hold,
As the sign of Martyrdom.

III.

JESUS AND JOHN CONTENDING FOR THE CROSS.

BY

SIMEONE DA PESARO; IN THE COLLECTION OF THE SEMINARY AT VENICE.

THE CHILD JOHN.

(TRYING TO TAKE THE CROSS OUT OF THE HAND OF JESUS.)

Give me the Cross, I pray you, dearest Jesus!
Oh! if you knew how much I wish to have it,
You would not hold it in your hand so tightly:
Something has told me,—something in my heart here,
Which I am sure is true,—that if you keep it,—
If you will let no other take it from you,—
Terrible things, I cannot bear to think of,
Must fall upon you; show me that you love me:
Am I not here to be your little servant,
Follow your steps and wait upon your wishes?

Oh! give it up, my child!
I see your bright eyes close,
Your soft fair fingers spattered all with blood,
Your cheeks dead pale;—throw down the horrid toy.

He grasps it firmer still!
I dare not thwart his hand;
For what he does, he does not of himself,
But in the Will of Him who sent him here.

And I, who labor blind
In this abysmal work,
Must bear the weight of dumb expectancy,
Of women first in honor and in woe!

IV.

CHRIST'S DESCENT INTO PURGATORY.

BY GIORGIONE, AT VENICE.

THE saving work for man is finishèd,
The kingdoms of the Earth and Air o'erthrown;
So now hath Christ come down among the dead,
Spoiling the Spoiler, to redeem his own.
What blessèd glory plays about that head
For those who here in fiery bondage groan,
Conscious their suffe'ring never could atone
For Sin, till He that once had sufferèd.
And, lo! in patient melancholy state
The synod of the Patriarchs rests apart
Condemned, tho' sons of God by faith, to wait
In this dark place and solitude of heart,
Joyless and tearless, till this Christ should come
To bear them to their Father and their home.

TO GIOVANNI BELLINI.

SUGGESTED BY THE FACT OF THAT PAINTER'S HAVING HAD IN HIS ROOM A GRECIAN STATUE OF VENUS AS A STUDY.

—•—

Thou didst not slight with vain and partial scorn
The inspirations of our nature's youth,
Knowing that Beauty, wheresoe'er 'tis born,
Must ever be the foster-child of Truth.
Nor didst thou lower the Mother of the Lord
To the mere Goddess of a Pagan bower,
But with such grace as Christians have adored
Those sense-delighting charms thou didst empower;
And would that they who followed thee, and gave
To famous Venice yet another fame,
To be the Painter's home, had done the same,
Nor made their Art the imitative slave
Of those dead forms, as if the Christian span
Embraced no living Poetry for man.

The decline of pure religious feeling in Art in Venice may be, perhaps, most accurately dated from the influence of Aretino over Titian; up to that time he had hardly ever painted a profane subject, and no other artist ever seems to have thought of it. Afterwards such exceptions as Bonifacio and the piety of the people prevented so sudden a degradation as took place in the Roman school from Raffael to Giulio Romano, and in the Bolognese from Francia to Guido; but too soon came the younger Palma and his followers, the Caracci of the Venetians.

TO RAFFAEL.

Raffael, alas! was the only person who conceived the project of recovering the remains of ancient Rome from its rubbish by means of methodical excavations, and this led to no result whatever.

NIEBUHR.

THINE was the scheme, and worthy to be thine,
O Painter-Poet! with care and regu'lar toil,
To raise those marvels from the' entombing soil
With which Greek Art made Rome a place divine.
Though Gothic rage with Christian zeal combine,
Earthquake with flood,—the desolating coil
Of plague two centuries old with Guiscard's spoil,—
Brancaleone's fiercely-sage design,
With other shocks,—of Pagan Rome to make
A mere blank memo'ry,—thou hadst bade awake
Rare shapes from their deep beds, had Sympathy
Lent thee good aid . . . Still I could wish for thee
That thou had'st never yearned for them,—elate
To be in CHRISTIAN Art so great among the Great.

THE IMMORTALITY OF ROME.

—•—

"URBI et Orbi *,"—mystic euphony,
What depth of Christian meaning lies in Thee!
How, from this world apart, this world above,
Selected by a special will of Love,
In its own spi'ritual atmosphere sublime,
Rome lives, a thought, without the reign of Time.
Thus, at the gates of great Eternity,
Nature, the constant he'rald of God, I see,
And ever onward reads she this decree:—
"Let nations have their cycles,—let their course
Still run unchanged, whate'er their inner force;
Let each, whate'er its fabric, firm or frail,
Give its one chapter to the' historic tale,

* The form of the Papal Benediction.

In silence and in shadow then to lie,
And, but in Memo'ry's echo-life, to die ;—
There is an end for all that is begun,
For the Sun's self, and all beneath the Sun."
Who dare deny this record ?—Rome alone ;
Rome has no histo'ry she can call her own ;—
The histo'ry of the Western World is hers,
Writ out in all its mazy characters :
What know we of it, till that name began,
Whose light still hovers o'er the Vatican ?
Where is the fount of all its myriad rills,
But springing 'mid the seven low Latian hills ?
There, thoughtless organs of divine intent,
Some scanty tribes in rudest union blent
Defensive force and martial will combined,
Till lust of conquest filled them, like a mind ;
Then fast the mustard-tree of power up-grew,
Fed into strength by Fortune's choicest dew,
Gathered the winds within its ample room,
And gave the swaying boughs a voice of doom,
For ever striving, as none else had striven,
Earth for its root, and for its branches Heaven *.

* You cannot plant an Oak in a flower-pot ;—she must have Earth for her root, and Heaven for her branches.

HARRINGTON—OCEANA.

And when the flush of life was past,—when came
Age's dry heart and Winter's naked shame,—
The conscious giant trembled at the spell,
Bowed his high head in agony, and fell.
That ruin is before us,—and we all
Have felt the shock of that tremendous fall
Within our quive'ring hearts; we all have seen
Those temples altarless, and streets grass-green,
And columns standing lone, and basements bare,
And fragments crumbling in the new-found air;
And, if at last our thought found utte'rance, said,
"Surely this is the City of the Dead!"

I stood one night,—one rich Italian night,
When the Moon's lamp was prodigal of light,—
Within that Circus, whose enormous range,
Tho' rent and shattered by a life of change,
Still stretches forth its undiminisht span,
Telling the weakness and the strength of Man.
In that vague hour which magnifies the great,
When Desolation seems most desolate,
I thought not of the rushing crouds of yore,
Who filled with din the vasty corridor;
Those hunters of fierce pleasure are swept by,
And host on host has trampled where they lie.

But where is He, that stood so strong and bold,
In his thick armour of enduring gold,
Whose massive form irradi'ant as the sun,
Baptized the work his glory beamed upon
With his own name, Colossal?—From the day
Has that sublime illusion shrunk away,
Leaving a blank weed-matted Pedestal
Of his high place the sole memorial?—
And is this mira'cle of imperial power,
The chosen of his tute'lage, hour by hour,
Following his doom, and Rome, alive,—awake?
Weak mother! orphaned as thou art, to take
From Fate this sordid boon of lengthened life,
Of most unnatu'ral life, which is not life,
As *thou* wert used to live; oh! rather stand
In thy green waste, as on the palm-fleckt sand,
Old Tadmor *, hiding not its death;—a tomb,
Haunted by sounds of life, is none the less a tomb.—
Then from that picture of the wreck-strewn ground,
Which the arch held in frame-work, slowly round
I turned my eyes and fixt them, where was seen

* Tadmor signifies the "City of the Palm-grove,"—hence the Roman appellation.

A long spare shadow stretcht across the green,
The shadow of the Crucifix,—that stood,
A simple shape of rude uncarven wood,
Raising, erect and firm, its lowly head
Amid that pomp of ruin,—amid the dead,
A sign of salient life;—the Mystery
Of Rome's immortal being was then made clear to me.

THE PAPAL BENEDICTION,

FROM ST. PETER'S.

HIGHER than ever lifted into space,
Rises the sove'ran dome,—
Into the Colonnade's immense embrace
Flows all the life of Rome;

The' assembled peasants of a hundred mountains,
Beneath the Sun's clear disk,
Behold that peerless Whole of radiant Fountains,—
Exorcised Obelisk,—

And massive Front, from whose high ridge outslanted,
A spacious awning fell;—
The swaying breadth each gazer's breast enchanted
To follow its slow swell.

Why are they met in their collective might,
That earnest multitude?
Is it to vindicate some injured right,
By threat and clamor rude?

To watch with tip-toe foot and eager eye
Some mere device of Pride,
Meaningless pomp of regal vanity
The void of Truth to hide?

To feed some popu'lar lust which cautious power
Would, for wise ends, restrain,
Not barte'ring to the passion of an hour
What ages toiled to gain?

Thanks, thanks to Heaven, that in these evil days,
Days of hard hearts and cold,
Days where no love is found in all our ways,
When Man is overbold,

And loathes all tender mutual offices,
And nothing old reveres,
Unwilling to be seen upon his knees,
Ashamed of his own tears,—

My soul the gracious privi'lege of this sight,
This priceless sight, has won,
A people of too simple faith to slight
A Father's benison ;—

Not in low flatte'ry, not in selfish dread,
Before one meek old man,
A people, a whole people, prostrated,
Infant and veteran.

By that High-Priest in prelude of deep prayer
Implored and sanctified,
The benediction of paternal care
Can never be denied.

Most surely from that narrow gallery,
The oriflamme unfurled,
Shelters within its grand benignity
Rome and the orbèd world.

The faintest wretch may catch the dew that falls
From those anointed lips,
And take away a wealth that never palls,
A joy without eclipse.

Old pines, that darkly skirt the circling hills,
Bend down in grateful awe,—
Infuse the earth's dry heart, prolific rills,
With Love's unbroken law!

Bear the glad tidings to your sister seas,
Mediterranean waves!
Let eve'ry mutte'ring storm be husht in peace,
Silent the thunde'rous caves!

And would my spi'rit from Earth's embasing rule
Were in this moment riven!
That I might pass through such fit vestibule
Up to the face of Heaven.

THE

ILLUMINATIONS OF ST. PETER'S.

I.

FIRST ILLUMINATION.

TEMPLE! where Time has wed Eternity,
How beautiful Thou art, beyond compare,
Now emptied of thy massive majesty,
And made so faery-frail, so faery-fair:
The lineaments that thou art wont to wear
Augustly traced in ponde'rous masonry,
Lie faint as in a woof of filmy air,
Within their frames of mellow jewelry.—
But yet how sweet the hardly-waking sense,
That when the strength of hours has quencht those gems,
Disparted all those soft-bright diadems,—
Still in the Sun thy form will rise supreme
In its own solid clear magnificence,
Divinest substance then, as now divinest dream.

II.

SECOND ILLUMINATION.

My heart was resting with a peaceful gaze,
So peaceful that it seemed I well could die
Entranced before such Beauty,—when a cry
Burst from me, and I sunk in dumb amaze:
The molten stars before a withe'ring blaze
Paled to annihilation, and my eye,
Stunned by the splendor, saw against the sky
Nothing but light,—sheer light,—and light's own haze.
At last that giddying Sight took form,—and then
Appeared the stable Vision of a Crown,
From the black vault by unseen Power let down,
Cross-topt,—thrice girt with flame:—
Cities of men,
Queens of the Earth! bow low,—was ever brow
Of mortal birth adorned as Rome is now?

III.

REFLECTION.

—•—

Past is the first dear phantom of our sight,
A loadstar of calm loveliness to draw
All souls from out this world of fault and flaw,
To a most perfect centre of delight,
Merged in deep fire;—our joy is turned to awe,
Delight to wonder,—this is just and right;—
A greater light puts out the lesser light,—
So be it ever,—such is God's high law.
The self-same Sun that calls the flowers from earth
Withers them soon, to give the fruit free birth;—
The nobler Spirit to whom much is given
Must take still more, though in that more there lie
The risk of losing All;—to gaze at Heaven,
We blind our earthly eyes;—to live we die.

THE FIREWORKS

FROM THE CASTLE OF ST. ANGELO.

PLAY on, play on, I share your gorgeous glee,
Creatures of elemental mirth, play on,—
Let each fulfil his marve'llous destiny,
My heart leaps up and falls in unison.
The Tower round which ye weave, with elfin grace,
The modulations of your burning dance,
Looks through your gambols with a grandsire's face,
A grave but not reproachful countenance;
Ye are the children of a festive night,
He is the mate of many' an hundred years,—
Ye but attest men's innocent delight,
He is the comrade of their crimes and tears,—
Ye in your joys' pure prime will flare away,
He waits his end in still and slow decay.

ON THE MARRIAGE OF

THE LADY GWENDOLIN TALBOT

WITH

THE ELDEST SON OF THE PRINCE BORGHESE.

LADY! to decorate thy marriage morn
Rare gems and flowers and lofty songs are brought;
Thou the plain utte'rance of a Poet's thought,
Thyself at heart a Poet, wilt not scorn.
The name, into whose splendor thou wert born,
Thou art about to change for that which stands
Writ on the proudest work* that mortal hands
Have raised from earth Religion to adorn.
Take it rejoicing;—take with thee thy dower,
Britain's best blood, and Beauty ever new,
Being of mind; may the cool northern dew
Still rest upon thy leaves, transplanted flower!
Mingling thy English nature, pure and true,
With the bright growth of each Italian hour.

ROME, May 11th, 1835.

* St. Peter's.

ROMAN RUINS.

How could Rome live so long, and now be dead?
How came this waste and wilderness of stones?
How shows the orbèd monster, so long fed
On martyr blood, his bare and crumbling bones?
Did the strong faith, that built eight hundred years
Of world-dominion on a robber's name,
Once animate this corse, and fervent seers
Augur it endless life and shadeless fame?
Stranger! if thou a docile heart dost bring
Within thee, bear a timely precept hence;
That Power, mere Power, is but a barren thing,
Even when it seems most like omnipotence;
The forms *must* pass,—and past, they leave behind
Little to please, and nought to bless mankind.

ON A SCENE IN TUSCANY.

WHAT good were it to dim the pleasure glow
That lights thy cheek, fair Girl, in scenes like these,
By shameful facts, and piteous histories?
While we enjoy, what matters what we know?
What tender love-sick looks on us below
Those Mountains cast! how courteously the Trees
Raise up their branching heads in calices
For the thick Vine to fill and overflow!
This nature is like Thee, all-bright, all-mild;
If then some self-wise man should say, that here
Hate, sin, and death held rule for many' a year,
That of this kindliest earth there's not a rood
But has been saturate with brother's blood,—
Believe him not, believe him not, my child.

TO WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR,

AGED NINE YEARS.

FIESOLE, 1833.

SWEET, serious, child,—strange boy! I fain would know
Why, when I fondly talk and sport with thee,
I never miss the' exuberant heart-flow
Which is the' especial charm of infancy:
Thou art so wise, so sober,—nothing wild,—
I hardly think, yet feel, thou art a child.

For had the' unnatu'ral bondage of a school
Blasphemed the Godhead of thy vernal years,
Encumbered thy light wings with vulgar rule,
And dimmed the blossoms in thy cheeks with tears,—
Thou mightst have been as grave, as still, as now,
But not with that calm smile, that placid brow.

Nor has the knowledge of dull manly things,
And intellect grown ripe before its time,
Defiled thy being's freshly-salient springs,
And made thee conscious of a world of crime;—
With all thy earnest looks, as spirit-free
As ever infant dancing down the lea.

Is it not that within thee, as a shrine,
The power of uncommunicable Art
Is working out its ministry divine,
Silently moulding thy all-virgin heart
To its own solemn ends? Thus dost thou wear
That priestly aspect,—that religious air;

And every circumstance of outward life
Tends this sublime ordainment to unfold;
Is not each chamber of thy dwelling rife
With miracles of purest painters old,—
The Saints and Patriarchs of Art,—who knew
How best to make the Beautiful the True?

Thou hast them all for teachers;—He is there,
The limner cowled *, who never moved his hand
Till he had steept his inmost soul in prayer:
Him thou art bound to in a special band,

* Fra Beato Angelico di Fiesole.

For he was born, and fed his heart, as thou,
On storied Fi'esole's fair-folded brow.

There thou canst read, with deeper reve'rence still,
Rare lessons of the later Monk*, who took
The world with awe of his inspirèd skill,
To which the' Apostle leaning on his book,
And those three marvels in old Lucca shown,
Bear witness, in the days we call our own.

There too Masaccio's grandly-plain design,—
Quaint Ghirlandaio,—and the mighty pair†,
Master and pupil, who must ever shine
Consociate Sove'rans,—thy preceptors are;
Nor pass him by, who with grave lines looks down
Upon thee, Michel of the triple crown.

Thou hast a Sire, whose full-experienced eye
Keeps harmony with an unerring heart,—
Who, of that glorified society,
To thy young sense can every depth impart
How dare I then deny thy perfect joy?
How dare *I* judge thee, thou unearthly Boy?

* Fra Bartolomeo, commonly called the "Frate."

† Pietro Perugino and Raffaello.

AN ITALIAN TO ITALY.

Along the coast of those bright seas,
Where sternly fought of old
The Pisan and the Genoese,
Into the evening gold
A ship was sailing fast,
Beside whose swaying mast
There leant a youth;—his eye's extended scope
Took in the scene, ere all the twilight fell;
And, more in blessing than in hope,
He murmured,—"Fare-thee-well."

"Not that thou gave'st my fathers birth,
And not that thou hast been
The terror of the antient earth
And Christendom's sole Queen;

But that thou wert and art
The beauty of my heart:—
Now with a lover's love I pray to thee,
As in my passio'nate youth-time erst I prayed;
Now, with a lover's agony,
I see thy features fade.

"They tell me thou art deeply low;
They brand thee weak and vile;
The cruel Northman tells me so,
And pities me the while:
What can *he* know of thee,
Glorified Italy?
Never has Nature to his infant mouth
Bared the full summer of her living breast;
Never the warm and mellow South
To his young lips was prest.

"I know,—and thought has often striven
The justice to approve,—
I know that all that God has given
Is given us to love;
But still I have a faith,
Which must endure till death,

That Beauty is the mother of all Love;
And Patriot Love can never purely glow
Where frowns the veilèd heaven above,
And' the niggard earth below.

"The wealth of high ancestral name,
And silken house-hold ties,
And battle-fields' memorial fame,
He earnestly may prize
Who loves and honors not
The country of his lot,
With undiscerning piety,—the same
Filial religion, be she great and brave,
Or sunk in sloth, and red with shame,
A monarch or a slave.

"But He who calls *this* heaven his own,
The very lowliest one,
Is conscious of a holier zone,
And nearer to the sun:
Ever it bids him hail,
Cloud-feathered and clear pale,

Or one vast dome of deep immacu'late blue,
Or, when the moon is on her mid-year throne,
With richer but less brilliant hue,
Built up of turkis stone.

"The springing corn that steept in light
Looks emerald, between
The deli'cate olive-branches, dight
In reverend gray-green;
Each flower with open breast,
To' the gale it loves the best;
The bland outbreathings of the midland sea,
The aloe-fringed and myrtle-shadowed shore,
Are precious things,—Oh, wo the be!
Must they be mine no more?

"And shall the matin bell awake
My native village crowd,
To kneel at shrines, whose pomp would make
A Northern city proud?
And shall the festival
Of closing Carnival

Bid the gay laughers thro' those arches pour,
Whose marble mass confronts its parent hill,
—And *I* upon a far bleak shore!
My heart will see them still:

" Beautiful forms! and aye repent
The waywardness and pride,
That was not with their charms content,
And yearned for aught beside;
For some imagined bliss
I might have slain all this,—
I might have sprent thy gorgeous robe with blood,
And scarred the lucid clearness of thy brow,
Dear land! in sooth, I meant thee good,
But know the madness now.

" What though in poverty and fear,
Thou thinkst upon the morrow,
Dutiful Art is ever near,
To wile thee from all sorrow;
Thou hast a power of melody,
To lull all sense of slavery;

Thy floral crown is blowing still to blow,
Thy eye of glory ceases not to shine,
And so long as these things be so,
I feel thee, bless thee, mine !"

There can be no desire in these lines to depreciate the high merit of the Italian political exiles of this (1831) and former years. If the intensity of their patriotic feelings be here fairly painted, the mightier has been their energy of self-sacrifice, and the heartier should be our admiration. But though

" Deh ! fossi tu men bella o almen piu forte,"

may be the stifled cry of many an Italian heart,—yet the mass, in weakness and in indolence, bear with their governors; and it is with regard to these, that we should weigh, in a just measure, the physical differences between countries, where Life is worth living for its own sake, and those where all the excitement of social and political feelings is necessary to give zest and enjoyment to existence.

ON LEAVING ITALY,

FOR THE SUMMER, ON ACCOUNT OF HEALTH.

Thou summer land! that dost put on the sun
Not as a dress of pomp occasional,
But as thy natu'ral and most fitting one,—
Yet still thy Beauty has its festival,
Its own chief day,
And I, though conscious of the bliss begun,
Must turn away!

I leave thee in thy royallest attire
Of affluent life,—I leave thee 'mid thy wealth
Of sunlight gold and jewels of all fire,—
Led by the paltry care of weakened health
And fear of pain;
Who knows that I shall see, ere I expire,
Thy face again!

I almost could persuade me that too dear
My Northern-island birthdom has been bought,
The vantage-ground of intellect, the clear
And bright expanse of action and of thought,
If I am bound
To limit all the good my heart has sought
To that cold ground.

What is my gain that I can take and mesh
The Beautiful in Nature's deepest sea,
If I am bound the bondman of the flesh,
And must not float upon the surface free?
Why should these powers
Bring nothing but a burden ever fresh
Of yearning hours?

Why do we wish the things we do not dare?
Why do I tremble at my æstuous Soul
That would embrace the burning god, and there
Give up into the elemental whole
Its worthless frame,
Whose instincts guide me captive everywhere,
In grief and shame?

Oh ! what a world of strifes of good and ill
Is this that we are cast in ? Head and Heart,
Body and Spirit, Faculties and Will,
Nothing at peace, all sundered and apart ;
Who would not shun
This war, if Death were *sure* to make him still,
Or make him One !

SWITZERLAND AND ITALY.

WITHIN the Switzer's varied land,
When Summer chases high the snow,
You'll meet with many a youthful band
Of strangers wande'ring to and fro:
Through hamlet, town, and healing bath,
They haste and rest as chance may call,
No day without its mountain-path,
No path without its waterfall.

They make the Hours themselves repay,
However well or ill be shared,
Content that they should wing their way,
Uncheckt, unreckoned, uncompared:
For though the hills unshapely rise,
And lie the colors poorly bright,—
They mould them by their cheerful eyes,
And paint them with their spirit's light.

Strong in their youthfulness, they use
The energies their souls possess;
And if some wayward scene refuse
To pay its part of loveliness,—
Onward they pass, nor less enjoy
For what they leave;—and far from me
Be every thought that would destroy
A charm of that simplicity!

But if *one* blot on that white page
From Doubt or Mise'ry's pen be thrown,—
If *once* the sense awake, that Age
Is counted not by years alone,—
Then no more grand and wondrous things!
No active happinesses more!
The wounded Heart has lost its wings,
And change can only fret the sore.

Yet there is calm for those that weep,
Where the divine Italian sea
Rests like a maiden husht asleep
And breathing low and measuredly;
Where all the sunset-purpled ground,
Fashioned by those delicious airs,
Seems strewed with softest cushions round
For weary heads to loose their cares:

Where Nature offers, at all hours,
Out of her free imperial store,
That perfect Beauty their weak powers
Can help her to create no more:
And grateful for that antient aid,
Comes forth to comfort and relieve
Those minds in prostrate sorrow laid,
Bidding them open and receive!

Though still 'tis hardly she that gives,
For Nature reigns not there alone,
A mightier queen beside her lives,
Whom she can serve but not dethrone;
For she is fallen from the state
That waited on her Eden-prime,
And Art remains by Sin and Fate
Unscatht, for Art is not of Time.

ON

THE CHURCH OF THE MADALEINE, AT PARIS.

I.

The Attic temple whose majestic room
Contained the presence of the' Olympian Jove,
With smooth Hymettus round it and above,
Softe'ning the splendour by a sober bloom,
Is yielding fast to Time's irreve'rent doom;
While on the then barbarian banks of Seine
That noble type is realised again
In perfect form, and dedicate—to whom?
To a poor Syrian girl, of lowliest name,
A hapless creature, pitiful and frail
As ever wore her life in sin and shame,—
Of whom all histo'ry has this single tale,—
"She loved the Christ, she wept beside his grave,
And He, for that Love's sake, all else forgave."

II.

If one, with prescient soul to understand
The working of this world beyond the day
Of his small life, had taken by the hand
That wanton daughter of old Magdala;
And told her that the time was ripe to come
When she, thus base among the base, should be
More served than all the Gods of Greece and Rome,
More honored in her holy memory,—
How would not men have mockt and she have scorned
The fond Diviner?—Plausible excuse
Had been for them, all moulded to one use
Of feeling and of thought, but We are warned
By such ensamples to distrust the sense
Of Custom proud and bold Experience.

III.

THANKS to that element of heavenly things,
That did come down to earth, and there confound
Most sacred thoughts with names of usual sound,
And homeliest life with all a Poet sings.
The proud Ideas that had ruled and bound
Our moral nature were no longer kings,
Old Power grew faint and shed his eagle-wings,
And grey Philosophy was half uncrowned.
Love, Pleasure's child, betrothed himself to Pain;—
Weakness, and Poverty, and Self-disdain,
And tranquil suffe'rance of repeated wrongs,
Became adorable;—Fame gave her tongues,
And Faith her hearts to objects all as low
As this lorn child of infamy and woe.

IMPRESSION,

ON RETURNING TO ENGLAND.

In just accordance with attentive sight,
Through airy space and round our planet ball,
The inorganic world is voiced with Light,
And Colors are the words it speaks withal.
Thus has my eye had glad experience
Of that most perfect utte'rance and clear tone,
With which all visi'ble things address the sense,
In lands retiring from the northern zone.
But, oh! in what poor language, faintly caught,
Do the old features of my England greet
Her stranger-son! how powerless,—how unmeet
For the free vision Italy had taught
What to expect from Nature; I must scan
Her face, I fear, no more, and look alone to Man.

WRITTEN IN IRELAND.

CLIFDEN, IN CUNNEMARA.

Here the vast daughters of the eastward tide,
Heaved from the bosoms of the' Atlantic deep,
Lay down the burthen of their mighty forms,
Like some diviner natures of our kind,
Weary with gathered power, and sure to find
Only at once destruction and repose.
Yet no aerial cliff with harsh repulse
Confronts the roving buttresses of sea;
But on the gentle slant of yielding shores
The wande'rers of a world, intent on rest,
Impress their massive substances, break down
The' uneven slope by measureless degrees,
Wear out the line in thousand rugged shapes,

Detacht, dissolving, and peninsular,
Now closed within broad circle, like a lake,
Now narrow as a river far inland:
Thence rose the name whose very utterance
Is as an echo of the distant main,
The name of Cunnemara,—land of bays.

I stood among those waters and low hills,
Within the circuit of a goodly town,
Furnisht with mart and port and church and school,
Meet for the duteous work of social man
And all the uses of commodious life:
While round me circulated, free and wide,
A shifting crowd of almost giant shapes,
Creatures of busy blood and glorious eyes
Andalusian, (as beseems the race),
Moulds of magnificent humanity.
Then was I told that twenty years before,
Or less, this spot, thus gay and populous,
Was one unmitigated solitude,
And all this outer wonder brought about
By the mere act of one industrious man!
Thus rolls amain the large material world,
Impelled and energised by human will.

Accord not him alone the Hero's name,
Who weaves the complicate historic woof,
Out of the rough disorder of mankind,
Fashioning nations to his own proud law:
Nor him alone the Poet's, who creates,
In his own chamber and exclusive spirit,
A universe of beauty, undisturbed
But by serene and sister sympathies.

For He who in one unremitting chain
Of solemn purpose solders link to link
Of active day and meditative night,
And with unquive'ring heart and hand can meet
Ever distress, ever impediment,
And wring from out a world of checks and flaws
Some palpable and most perspicuous whole
Of realised design and change imprest,
Shall be enrolled among heroic souls,
Though small the scope and slow the growth of deed.

He too, whose care has made some arid soil
Alive with waters of humane delight,
That shall in merry channels gambol on,
Or rest in depths of happy consciousness,—

Has planted and defended in the wild
Some garden of affection, a safe place
For daily love to grow in, and when ripe
To shed sweet seeds, that in their turn will feed
The winds of life with odours, shall be writ
Poet,—Creator, in that book of worth,
Which Nature treasures for the eye of Heaven.

THE SUBTERRANEAN RIVER, AT CONG.

A PLEASANT mean of joy and wonder fills
The trave'ller's mind, beside this secret stream,
That flows from lake to lake beneath the hills,
And penetrates their slumber like a dream.

Untrackt by sound or sight it wends its way,
Save where this well-like cave descending far,
Through ivy curtains, lets the' uncertain day
Fall on the current and its couch of spar.

A slippe'ry stair will lead you to the brink,
There cast your torch athwart the gleaming tide,
And while you watch the motions of the link
That marries the great waters on each side,—

Think of our common life that glides a span
In partial light dark birth and death between,—
Think of the treasures of the heart of man
That once float by us and are no more seen.

Or, for more cheerful mood, let local fame
Recount, how in old time, the faery sprite,
Finvara, or some such melodious name,
Fashioned this channel for her own delight;

And here, distrest at these unloyal days,
Maskt in a milk-white fish, still sports along,
And altogether leaves the moonlight rays
For the cool shadow of her Caves of Cong.

We arrived at the Coleraine Salmon Leap on the 12th of August, just in time to see the last salmon caught,—the fishery there ending that day.

MSS. JOURNAL.

ONE moment more before that fatal leap!
One moment more! and now thou hadst been free
To wanton in the autumn sun or sleep
In the warmed crystal of thy little sea.
I saw thee pant,—I saw the flicke'ring shades
Wander beneath thy silver, loth to die,—
And still their glazèd brilliancy upbraids
The heavens that they permit man's perfidy.
But is it not a weak nor sinless thought,
Since Nature's law thus undisturbed has run,
Heedless of all the same hard fate has wrought,
To pass the myriad and deplore the one?
No, no,—our heart has but a narrow span,
Let it hold all the sympathy it can.

VALENTIA.

A FRAGMENT.

WHERE Europe's varied shore is bent
Out to the utmost Occident,
There rose of old from sea to air,
An island wonderful and fair!

Not that on his way to cheer
Our stranger-sister hemisphere,
Here the Sun is pleased to cast
Liefest smiles, as more his last,
Kinder than he gives to us—
Parting love-looks rubious:
Not that here the wind may fling
Odours from his faithless wing,

Scented breath of heaths and bowers,—
Keepsakes from confiding flowers,—
That the rover may be light
For his long Atlantic flight:—
Not that here the haughty land,
Spurning an assistant hand,
Makes a gracious rivalry
With its fere the hoary sea,
Offe'ring up to regal man
All the loyal gifts it can,
Such is not the rarity
O' the Island of the Western Sea.

The name is of a richer tone
Than our baptismal forms may own,—
A Spanish name, I little doubt,
Yet stands no Spanish lady out
When myriad star-rays mingle o'er
Her rose-emblazoned mirador,
Following with a flattered ear
A voice that follows a guitar,
Too mild and mellowed to be near,
But every precious word so clear,
It cannot come from *very* far.

No relick of gone days is here,
No antient-minded cavalier,
Who takes his grandson on his knee
And half in play, half earnestly,
Watches the darling's tender hand
Labour to clasp a well-used brand,
Which sleeps in quiet rust at last,—
And tells him of the echoing past,
What time the gallant Moorish race
Made Christian Spain their dwelling-place,
But Spain could never be the slavè
Of stranger hosts, however brave,
And how this steel had helped to free
Her soil from turbaned Paynimrie.

The world has had its childly days,
Passion-bred hopes and earnest plays,—
The world has had its manhood fraught
With power and war and holy thought,—
The world is now grown vain and old,
Her head and heart are palsy cold,—
Light was called to meet her prime,
Thunder waits on her eve-time,
With a light that is not light,
But a death-glare ghastly bright.

And a voice is every where
Louder than thousand trumpets' blare,
" Hear it, ye mortals, every one,
The life from out your world is gone."

So murmurs many' a soul sublime,
Engaoled in this unhealthy time,
Whose embryo-thoughts and half-desires
Feed not his heart's sky-seeking fires;
Who scales all highths, and with sharp ken
Observes the policies of men,
Their aims and objects, and can see,
However wide the' horizon be,
No onward-leading knightly road,
Such as his antient heroes trode,—
No one secure and honest way
Where he can travel night and day,—
But every moment full of fear,
Of Truth forgot and Error near:
He dare not mingle in that maze,
He dare not front the doubtful haze,—
He dare not,—as he would keep whole
His virgin rectitude of soul,
As he holds dear his life to be
His claim to blest Eternity!

And thus, with all his loving mind,
He stands at bay against his kind,
Half sad to see amidst the blind.

Is there no refuge but the tomb
For all this timeless spirit-bloom?
Does earth no other prospect yield
But one broad barren battle-field?
Or if there be some cradling spot
Where such grown evil enters not,
Lies it in countries far away
From where he first drank in the day?
Where, if despairing he be driven,
He must renounce his native heaven,
No more by olden ties be bound,
Take other dress, and let the sound
Of native and of neighbour speech
No more his aliened senses reach!

Be it not so! for thou art here,
O Island beautifully drear!
For thou, encounte'ring such a guest,
Wilt claspt him to thy hardy breast,
And bid him dwell at peace with thee
In thy uncitied modesty;

Let him his spirit slake and steep
In thy immense Atlantic deep,—
Let him from thy rude nature gain
Some sturdy posture to sustain
The burthen of ideal care
To which the Poet's soul is heir.

* * * * *

* * * * *

HISTORICAL POEMS.

SAUL AND DAVID.

And it came to pass, when the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refresht, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

1 SAM. XVI. 23.

"AN evil spirit lieth on our King!"
So went the wailful tale up Israel,
From Gilgal unto Gibeah; town and camp
Caught the sad fame that spread like pestilence,
In the low whispers of pale maiden lips,
And tones, half-stifled by religious awe,
Outbreathed from hearts that else had known no fear.

There stood a Boy beside the glooming King,
Whose serfish garb was strangely dissonant

To the high bearing and most gentle air
That waited on his beauty; health and joy,
Tho' tempered now by sorrowing reverence,
Lay on his rose-red cheek; transcendent love
Rounded his brow; and when the deli'cate hand
Swept o'er the chords of that sweet instrument,
With which it long had been his use to fill
The lonely measure of his pasto'ral hours,—
It would have been no weak idolatry
To shroud your eyes and feel your heart beat strong,
As in the presence of one fresh from heaven,
Come down to save that doomed and deso'late man.

A strain of war,—a deep and nervous strain
Of full and solemn notes, whose long-drawn swell
Dies on the silence, slow and terrible,
Making the blood of him who listens to it
To follow the great measure; every tone
Clear in its utterance, and eloquent
Above all words: there was the settled tramp
Of warriors faithful to ancestral swords;
There was the prayer that was not all a prayer,
But rising in a suppliant murmuring
Grows to a war-cry,—" Victory, oh God!
For Israel's God and Israel, victory!"

Then came the onset,—chord fast following chord,
In passio'nate clang, as if the conscious harp
Were prodigal of all its life of sound,
To give that awful feint reality.

From off the couch, at one enormous leap,
To where his helmet and long-shadowing spear
And brazen target hung beside the wall,
Bounded the King, and graspt the quive'ring arms.
He raised his hand, and, as to gathe'ring hosts,
Shouted, " Where's Jonathan?—he is not here;
Watchman, look out! I cannot find my son;
Here is the Ark,—there is the Philistine,—
There too is Jonathan! On, Israel,—on!
Alloo! Alloo*!" He ceast; and while the short
Heroic blaze flared and died out, he cried,
In a most faint and miserable voice,
" He is not *there*,—the foe!—he is within!"
And fell upon his face, even as before.

The harper paused; and when a struggling tear
Dropt on the string from his uplifted eye,
The spirit of the strain was changed;—awhile

* 1 Sam. xiv. 17 to 20.

An under-current of discordant tones
Went trickling on, beneath the random fingers,—
Till, from a labyrinth of tangled notes
Came up with placid step a shape of sound
Distinct and fine-proportioned, redolent
Of love,—a fair old Hebrew melody,
Most plaintive numbers, born of that pure time,—
That golden-shaded, half-revealèd time,
When Israel's patriarchs fed their wealth of herds
About the myrrhine shades of Araby,
And eve'ry passion out of their chaste hearts
Gusht freely forth, and wove a sepa'rate song.
But, more than all, to the tormented King
That rythm was full of memo'ries ;—fold by fold
The grey loose veil of long-forgotten Time
Shrunk back before the mystic minstrelsy ;
He was once more the simple Benjamite,
The gallant Boy, the innocent, the brave,
The choicest and the goodliest of his peers * ;
He was once more the owner of a life
Whose moments were all feathered, and kept cool
From scorching passion by continuous airs
Of gaysome hope and self-contenting joy.

* 1 Sam. ix. 2.

Awful command and peri'lous empery
The diffi'cult mean of power,—the hard, hard, task
To be at once a lord and servitor,
To rule allotted kingdoms and obey,
The caster of the lot, the King of Kings,
Had set no snaring choice before him, *then.*
How often in the vain and weary guest
When he pursued his father's wande'ring droves
All down the slopes of pleasant Ephraim
Thro' Shalisha and Shalim, had his ear
Drunk in the burthen of that antique tune
Giving him brotherhood with stranger-lands:
Oft too the maid, whose image ever lived
Within his breast, stronger than all real things,
Returning homeward when the' expiring Sun
Mingled its life-blood with the waning light,
Had clothed her long farewell in that rich form,
While he, expecting on some distant height
His starlit watch, sent back such loud response
As made a chorus of the echoing hills.

As when the surges of the midland sea,
Break on the carious, citron-fruited, shore
Of Western Italy in morn's grey prime,
Slowly above the coasting Apennine,

The sun appearing meets the wallowing foam
And pierces it with light, till eve'ry wave
Loses its frowning aspect and now sports
About the myrtles, showe'ring precious gifts,
Rare diamond globes and flecks of liquid gold:
So to the fury of the darkened Spirit
The sunrise of that harmony unveiled
Its beauty, making beautiful, so fell,
Transformed from out its former terri'ble shape,
The passion into tender sympathy.
Tears, blessed tears, in full profusion burst
From the dry sockets, breaking up the dams
And foul embankments, arts of ill had raised
Against all holy natu'ral impulses.

From the prostration of his body' and soul
Saul rose, but as a man who long had lain
Wasted by dire disease,—pale, sorrowful,
Yet calm and almost smiling in his woe.
And did He not rejoice, that marve'llous youth,
To see his pious mediating work
Consummated? Glowed not his downy cheek
With a serene delight, while fade away
The notes in linge'ring trills and solemn sighs?
But is his countenance of other hue

When Saul, in gene'rous gratefulness profuse,
Proffers him jewels, wealth, and titled name,
Or other gift, whate'er his soul might crave.
A pallid tremor swept across his face,
As with a suppliant but determi'nate mien
He speaks, "Oh! deem not, deem not, gracious Lord!
That I, of mean estate, dare scorn the boon
Thy sove'ran bounty would pour forth on me,
But yet no gems, no gold, no praise for me!
Glory and praise and honor be to Him,
In the great circle of whose single will
I and my harp are most poor instruments,
His mightiness and goodness to proclaim.
Go forth into the clear and open air,
Look at all common things, and thou wilt find
The form of all this outward Universe
Is as the Body of the Living God:
And eve'ry movement, odour, shade, and hue
Is animate with music as divine
As lute, or harp, or dulcimer: to thee,
The' anthemnal voice of aged cataracts,
The jovial murmurings of summer brooks,
The carol that emblazoned flowers send up
From the cold earth in spring-time, the wild hymn
Of winter blasts sitting among the pines,

And the articu'late pulse of that large heart
Which beats beneath the Ocean, will be parts
Of the eternal symphony sublime,
In which the Maker of all worlds reveals
The spirit-depths of his untiring Love;
If then all Nature, rightly askt, can do
What I have done, how dare I claim reward?"

In sooth it was a wondrous sight to see
How far above the proud and vaunted king,
In all the moral majesty of being,
That moment stood the God-selected child.
Thrice through the chamber with irreso'lute step
Saul paced, and prest his hand upon his temples,
As if to hide the passing cloud of shame,
Then answe'ring not a word, and motioning
That David should retire, in thoughtfulness
Or prayer, he past into the outer hall.

DECIUS BRUTUS,

ON THE COAST OF PORTUGAL.

Having traverst the whole of the country to the very coast, the conqueror at last turned his standards, but not until, with a certain dread of sacrilege and conscious horror, he had discovered the Sun sinking into the ocean, and its fire overwhelmed by the waters. FLORUS.

NEVER did Day, her heat and trouble o'er,
Proclaim herself more blest,
Than when, beside that Lusitanian shore,
She wooed herself to rest:

And, freed from all that cumbrous-gilded dress
That pleased the lusty noon,
Lay down in her thin-shaded loveliness,
Cool as the coming moon.

There stood the gentlest and the wildest growth
Together in the calm,
The nightingale's long song was over both,
A dream of bliss and balm.

Pale-amber fruit among the cloiste'ring leaves
Hung redolent and large,
Strong-spikèd aloes topt the broad rock-eaves
Above that fair sea-marge.

When through a thunder-cleft, now summer-dry,
A loosely-straggling band,
Plated in war's offensive blazonry,
Descended on the strand.

Men of flint brows, hard hands and hearts, were they,
Hunters of weaker men,
Shedders of blood for pleasure and for prey,
Wolves of the Roman den.

From their great home they had come out so far,
Nor ever loss or shame
Had lowered their fierce pride, they likened war
To pestilence or flame.

Frighting the tongueless caves with untuned cries,
They leapt from stone to stone;
But last, and linge'ring, with unheedy eyes,
The leader came alone.

And suddenly upon the clear-edged orb,
Fast-verging to the sea,
He gazed, like one whom music doth absorb
In mournful reverie.

His burly limbs were frosted with strange cold,
His blood grew half-asleep,
Beholding the huge corpse of ruddy gold
Let down into the deep.

At last to that wild crew he called aloud,
"O soldiers! we have been
Too daring-hardy,—we have been too proud,—
Too much have done and seen.

"It is a ventu'rous and unholy thing
To try the utmost bound
Of possibility,—our froward wing
Has reacht forbidden ground.

" We stand upon the earth's extremest edge,
Beside the sacred bed
Of the Sun-god,—it is a privilege
Too lofty not to dread."—

But they were drunk with glory as with wine,
They heard him not that day;
That coast to them was nothing but a sign
Of Rome's earth-circling sway;

Till when, like dancers by amazing thunder
Stunned in their mad career,
Their bold mid-revel ceased for very wonder,
Their insolence for fear.

For they had caught a sound, first quive'ring low,
Then wide'ning o'er the brine,
As of a river slowly poured into
A red-hot iron mine *.

* For the notion of the fearful noise which accompanied the fall and quenching of the sun in the great Western Ocean, consult Strabo, lib. iii.; Juvenal, xiv. 279; Ausonius, epist. xviii. The wide credit which this local tradition obtained may be inferred from the serious refutation of the physical fact in the second Book of the Cyclic Theory of Cleomedes.

And with confede'rate looks and held-in breath,
They watcht the molten round
Loosing its form, the swelte'ring ooze beneath,
To that terrific sound.

The hissing storm toward the darke'ning land
A heated west-wind bore;
They closed their ears, they croucht upon the sand,
But heard it more and more.

They saw the whole full Ocean boil and swell,
Receiving such a guest
As elemental Light inscrutable,
Within its patient breast.

At last into the void of dreary space
The tumult seemed to roll,
And left no other noise on Nature's face
Than the waves' muffled toll.

But to their first mistempered haughtiness
Those hearts returned no more,—
They were encumbered with a sore distress,
Crusht to the very core.

The Chief this while had stood apart, and bowed
In penitential pain
His staunch war-soul, till that now-supple croud
His voice thus reacht again:—

"Oh what a sanctu'ary have we profaned
In this unblest emprize!
Oh that a jealous wrath may be restrained
By timely sacrifice!

"On these crag-altars let our choicest spoil
Be laid with humblest prayer;
For what avails our valor or our toil,
If angered Gods be there?

"As ye hold dear the memory of Rome,
Implore the Lords of Heaven,
That we once more may bear our victo'ries home,
This sacrilege forgiven!"

So was it done:—columns of vapo'rous grey
Rose from that lone sea-glen,—
And Brutus and his followers turned away
Wiser and gentler men.

* * * * * *

Thus, in the time when Fancy was the nurse
Of our young human heart,
The Power whose voice is in the universe,
And through each inmost part

Vibrates, and in one total melody
Man and Creation blends,
Workt out by marvel and by prodigy
Its high religious ends.

Knowledge to us another scene displays,
We fear nor sight nor sound;
Nature has bared her bosom, and we gaze
Into the vast profound.

A myriad of her subtlest harmonies
Our learnèd ears can tell;
We dare those simple liste'ners to despise,
But do we *feel* as well?

THE DEATH OF ALMANZOR.

Almanzor was the Campeador of the Moors in Spain, the guardian of the fainéant King Hixem ;—it is thought he aspired to the crown.

Two and fifty times Almanzor had the Christian host
o'erthrown ;
Still again the Christians gatherèd, by despair the
stronger grown.

Cityless and mountain-refuged they approacht the
Douro's shores,
Falling, as a storm in summer, on the unsuspecting
Moors.

Valiantly the Moslem rallied, all unordered as they
stood,
Till the Evening, in her shadow, bore them safe across
the flood.

Then they cried, "The stream's between us; now can
we their schemes defy;"—
But the great Almanzor spoke,—"I have retreated, and
I die."

"Allah, keep us from such evil!" prayed the faithful,
crouding round,
While the wise Arabian leech his wounds examined,
stauncht, and bound.

"Lightly has the Christian toucht thee,—much for thee
is yet in store;
Many are thy years, but Allah gives his conque'rors
many more.

"Do not the huge bells, that summoned pilgrims to
Iago's shrine,
Hang within our prophet's temple, and confess thy work
divine?

"What is it that one small moment thou and thine did
seem to yield,
Wielders of Mohammed's sword, and guarded by
Mohammed's shield?

" Few shall be their boastful hours,—thou in wrath wilt rise again;
Thou shalt cleanse the mountains of them, like the cities and the plain."

So consoled the duteous servant, but he could not still the cry
Bursting from Almanzor's lips,—" I have retreated, and I die."

Once he rose and feebly spoke,—" My friends, I perish of self-scorn;
Shame is come on my white hairs,"—and thus he died the morrow-morn.

Fiercest hands in sorrow trembled, as they deeply dug the grave,
On the spot where Azrael's lance had struck the captain of the brave.

There his spirit's dearest brethren, closest comrades of his glory,
Laid him as a Moslem-martyr, in his garments torn and gory.

There too, from his side unsevered, lay his old familiar
brand,
Never to be toucht and tarnisht by a less victorious
hand.

From a chest that in his marches ever had been borne
before him,
Holy dust from two and fifty battle-fields was sprinkled
o'er him;

While arose the imprecation, "Utter Death to Chris-
tian Spain!"
Praise to Jesus and his mother, that the vow was vowed
in vain!

THE DEPARTURE OF ST. PATRICK FROM SCOTLAND.

FROM HIS OWN "CONFESSIONS."

Twice to your son already has the hand of God been shewn,
Restoring him from alien bonds to be once more your own,
And now it is the self-same hand, dear kinsmen, that to-day
Shall take me for the third time from all I love away.

While I look into your eyes, while I hold your hands in mine,
What force could tear me from you, if it were not all divine?
Has my love ever faltered? Have I ever doubted yours?
And think you I could yield me now to any earthly lures?

I go not to some balmier land in pleasant ease to rest,—
I go not to content the pride that swells a mortal breast,—
I go about a work my God has chosen me to do;
Surely the soul which is his child must be his servant too.

I seek not the great city where our sacred father dwells,—
I seek not the blest eremites within their sandy cells,—
I seek not our Redeemer's grave in distant Palestine,—
Another, shorter pilgrimage, a lonelier path is mine.

When sunset clears and opens out the breadth of western sky,
To those who in yon mountain isles protect their flocks on high
Loom the dark outlines of a land, whose nature and whose name
Some have by harsh experience learnt, and all by evil fame.

Oh, they are wild and wanton men, such as the best will be,
Who know no other gifts of God but to be bold and free,
Who never saw how states are bound in golden bonds of law,
Who never knew how strongest hearts are bent by holy awe.

When first into their pirate hands I fell, a very boy,
Skirting the shore from rock to rock in unsuspecting joy,
I had been taught to pray, and thus those slavish days were few,
A wondrous hazard brought me back to liberty and you.

But when again they met me on the open ocean field,
And might of numbers prest me round and forced my arm to yield,
I had become a man like them, a selfish man of pride,
I could have curst the will of God for shame I had not died.

And still this torment haunted me three weary years, until
That summer night,—among the sheep,—upon the seaward hill,
When God of his miracu'lous grace, of his own saving thought,
Came down upon my lonely heart and rested unbesought!

That night of light! I cared not that the day-star glimmered soon,
For in my new-begotten soul it was already noon;
I knew before what Christ had done, but never felt till then
A shadow of the love for him that he had felt for men!

Strong faith was in me,—on the shore there lay a stranded boat,
I hasted down, I thrust it out, I felt it rock afloat;
With nervous arm and sturdy oar I sped my wate'ry way,
The wind and tide were trusty guides,—one God had I and they.

As one from out the dead I stood among you free and whole,
My body Christ could well redeem, when he had saved my soul;
And perfect peace embraced the life that had been only pain,
For Love was shed upon my head from every thing, like rain.

Then on so sweetly flowed the time, I almost thought to sail
Eve'n to the shores of Paradise in that unwave'ring gale,
When something rose and nightly stood between me and my rest,
Most like some one, beside myself, reflecting in my breast.

I cannot put it into words, I only know it came,
A sense of self-abasing weight, intolerable shame,
"That I should be *so* vile that not one tittle could be paid
Of that enormous debt which Christ upon my soul had laid!"

This yielded to another mood, strange objects gathered
near,
Phantoms that entered not by eye, and voices not by
ear,
The land of my injurious thrall a gracious aspect wore,
I yearned the most toward the forms I hated most
before.

I seemed again upon that hill, as on that blissful
night,
Encompast with celestial air and deep retiring light,
But sight and thought were fettered down, where glim-
me'ring lay below
A plain of gasping, struggling, men in every shape of
woe.

Faint solemn whispers gathered round, " Christ suffered
to redeem,
Not you alone, but such as these, from this their savage
dream,—
Lo, here are souls enough for you to bring to him, and
say,
These are the earnest of the debt I am too poor
to pay."

A cloud of children freshly born, innumerable bands,
Past by me with imploring eyes and little lifted hands,
And all the Nature, I believed so blank and waste and dumb,
Became instinct with life and love, and echoed clearly "Come!"

"Amen!" said I; with eager steps a rude descent I tried,
And all the glory followed me like an on-coming tide,
With trails of light about my feet I crost the darkling wild,
And, as I toucht each suffe'rer's hand, he rose and gently smiled.

Thus night on night the vision came, and left me not alone,
Until I swore that in that land should Christ be preacht and known,
And then at once strange coolness past on my long fevered brow,
As from the flutter of light wings: I feel, I feel it now!

And from that moment unto this, this last and proving one,
I have been calm and light at heart as if the deed were done;
I never thought how hard it was our earthly loves to lay
Upon the altar of the Lord, and watch them melt away!

Speak, friends! speak what you will,—but change those asking looks forlorn,
—Sustain me with reproachful words,—uphold me with your scorn:
—I know God's heart is in me, but my human bosom fears
Those drops that pierce it as they fall, those full and silent tears.

These comrades of my earliest youth have pledged their pious care
To bear me to the fronting coast, and gently leave me there:
It may be I shall fall at once, with little toil or need,—
Heaven often takes the simple will for the most perfect deed:

Or, it may be that from that hour beneath my hand may spring
A line of glories unachieved by hero, sage, or king,—
That Christ may glorify himself in this ignoble name,
And shadow forth my endless life in my enduring fame.

—All as He wills! Now bless me, mother,—your cheek is almost dry:—
Farewell, kind brothers!—only pray ye may be blest as I;
Smile on me, sisters,—when death comes near each of you, still smile,
And we shall meet again somewhere, within a little while!

CHARLEMAGNE,

AND

THE HYMN OF CHRIST.

—•—

And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.
MATT. xxvi. 30; MARK xiv. 26.

THE great King Karl sat in his secret room,—
He had sat there all day;
He had not called on minstrel knight or groom
To wile one hour away.

Of arms or royal toil he had no care,
Nor e'en of royal mirth;
As if a poor lone monk he rather were,
Than lord of half the earth.

But chance he had some pleasant company;
Dear wife, familiar friend,
With whom to let the quiet hours slip by,
As if they had no end.

The learnèd Alcuin, that large-browed clerk,
Was there within, and none beside;
A book they read, and, where the sense was dark,
He was a trusty guide.

What book had worth so long to occupy
The thought of such a king,
To make the weight of all that sovranty
Be a forgotten thing?

Surely it were no other than the one,
Whose every line is fraught
With what a mightier king than He had done,
Conquered, endured, and taught.

There his great soul, drawn onward by the eye,
Saw in plain chronicle pourtrayed
The slow unfolding of the mystery
On which its life was stayed.

There read he how when Jesus, our dear Lord,
To men of sin and dust had given,
By the transforming magic of his word,
The bread of very Heaven;

So that our race, by Adam's fatal food
Reduced to base decline,
Partaking of that body and that blood,
Might be again divine,—

After this wondrous largess, and before
The unimagined pain,
Which, in Gethsemane, the Saviour bore
Within his heart and brain,—

He read, how these two acts of Love between,
Ere that prolific day was dim,
Christ and his Saints, like men with minds serene,
Together sung an hymn.

These things he read in childly faith sincere,
Then paused and fixt his eye,
And said with kingly utterance—"I must hear
That Hymn before I die.

" I will send forth through sea and sun and snows,
To lands of every tongue,
To try if there be not some one which knows
The music Jesus sung.

" For I have found delight in songs profane
Trolled by a foolish boy,
And when the monks intone a pious strain,
My heart is strong in joy;

" How blessèd then to hear those harmonies,
Which Christ's own voice divine engaged,
'T would be as if a wind from Paradise
A wounded soul assuaged."

Within the Empe'ror's mind that anxious thought
Lay travai'ling all night long,
He dreamed that Magi to his hand had brought
The burthen of the Song;

And when to his grave offices he rose,
He kept his earnest will,
To offer untold guerdons unto those
Who should that dream fulfil.

But first he called to counsel in the hall
Wise priests of reve'rend name,
And with an open counte'nance to them all
Declared his hope and aim.

He said, " It is God's pleasure, that my will
Is made the natu'ral law
Of many nations, so that out of ill
All good things I may draw.

" Therefore this holy mission I decree,
Sparing no pains or cost,
That thus those sounds of dearest memory
Be not for ever lost."

They spake. " Tradition streameth thro' our race,
Most like the gentle whistling air,
To which of old Elias veiled his face,
Conscious that God was there:

" Not in the storm, the earthquake, and the flame,
That troubled Horeb's brow,
The splendor and the power of God then came,
Nor thus he cometh now.

"The silent water filtereth through earth,
One day to bless the summer land;
The Word of God in Man slow bubbleth forth,
Toucht by a worthy hand.

"Thus, in the memo'ry of some careful Jew
May lurk the record of a tune
Wont to be sung in ceremonial due
After the Paschal noon;

"And thy deep yearning for this mystic song
May give mankind at last
Some charm and blessing that has slept full long
The slumber of the Past."

The King rejoiced, and, at this high behest,
Men to all toil and change inured,
Past out to search the World if East or West
That legend still endured.

What good or ill those ventu'rous hearts befell,
What glory or what shame,—
How far they wandered, I have not to tell;
Each has his sepa'rate fame.

I only know, that when the weight of hours
The prime of mortal heads had bowed,
He, slowly letting go his outward powers,
Spoke from his couch aloud :—

" My soul has waited many' a linge'ring year
To taste that one delight,
And now I know at last that I shall hear
The hymn of Christ to-night.

" Look out, good friends! be prompt to welcome home,
Straight to my presence bring,
My messengers, who hither furnisht come
The Song of Christ to sing."

Dark sank that night, but darker rose the morn,
That found the western earth
Of the divinest presence stript and shorn
It ever woke to birth.

It seemed beyond the common lawful sway
Of Death and Nature o'er our kind,
That such a one as He should pass away,
And aught be left behind.

In Aachen Abbey's consecrated round,
Within the hollowed stone,
They placed the' imperial Body, robed and crowned,
Seated, as on a throne.

While the blest Spirit holds communion free
With that eternal quire,
Of which on earth to trace the memory
Was his devout desire.

THE BEGGAR'S CASTLE*.

A STORY OF THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.

—•—

Those ruins took my thoughts away
To a far eastern land;
Like camels, in a herd they lay
Upon the dull red sand;
I know not that I ever sate
Within a place so desolate.

Unlike the relics that convert
Our hearts with antient Time,
All moss-besprent and ivy-deckt,
Gracing a lenient clime,
Here all was death and nothing born,—
No life but the unfriendly thorn.

* I am indebted for this legend, and part of its conduct, to Jean Reboul, the baker-poet of Nismes, the Burns of modern France.

"My little guide, whose sunny eyes
And darkly-lucid skin,
Witness, in spite of shrouded skies,
Where southern realms begin;
Come, tell me all you've heard and know
About these mighty things laid low."

The Beggar's Castle, wayward name,
Was all these fragments bore,
And wherefore legendary fame
Baptized them thus of yore,
He told in words so sweet and true,
I wish that he could tell it you.

A puissant Seigneur, who in wars
And tournays had renown,
With wealth from prudent ancestors
Sloping unbroken down,
Dwelt in these towers, and held in fee
All the broad lands that eye can see.

He never tempered to the poor
Misfortune's bitter blast,
And when before his haughty door
Widow and orphan past,
Injurious words, and dogs at bay,
Were all the welcome that had they.

The Monk who toiled from place to place,
That God might have his dole,
Was met by scorn and foul grimace,
And oaths that pierced his soul;
'T was well for him to flee and pray,
"They know not what they do and say."

One evening, when both plain and wood
Were trackless in the snow,
A Beggar at the portal stood,
Who little seemed to know
That Castle and its evil fame,
As if from distant shores he came.

Like channelled granite was his front,
His hair was crisp with rime,—
He askt admittance, as was wont
In that free-hearted time;
For who would leave to die i' the cold
A lonely man and awful-old.

At first his prayer had no reply,—
Perchance the wild wind checkt it,
But when it rose into a cry,
No more the inmates reckt it,
Till where the cheerful fire-light shone,
A voice out-thundered,—"Wretch! begone."

"There is no path,—I have no strength,—
What can I do alone?
Grant shelter, or I lay my length,
And perish on the stone;
I crave not much,—I should be blest
In kennel or in barn to rest."

"What matters thy vile head to me?
Dare not to touch the door!"
"Alas! and shall I never see
Home, wife, and children more?"—
"If thou art still importunate,
My serfs shall nail thee to the gate."

But, when the wrathful Seigneur faced
The object of his ire,
The beggar raised his brow debased
And armed his eyes with fire:
"Whatever guise is on me now,
I am a mightier Lord than thou!"

"Madman or cheat! announce thy birth."—
"*That* thou wilt know to-morrow."
"Where are thy fiefs?"—"The whole wide Earth."
"And what thy title?"—"Sorrow."
Then ope'ning wide his ragged vest,
He cried,—"Thou canst not shun thy guest."

He stampt his foot with fearful din,—
With imprecating hand
He struck the door, and past within
Right through the menial band:
"Follow him, seize him,—There—and there!"
They only saw the blank night air.

But He was at his work: ere day
Began the work of doom,
The Lord's one daughter, one bright may,
Fled with a base-born groom,
Bearing about, where'er she came,
The blighting of an antient name.

His single son, that second self,
Who, when his first should fall,
Would hold his lands and hoarded pelf,
Died in a drunken brawl;—
And now alone amidst his gold
He stood, and *felt* his heart was cold.

Till, like a large and patient sea
Once roused by cruel weather,
Came by the raging Jacquerie,
And swept away together
Him and all his, save that which time
Has hoarded to suggest our rhyme.

THE END.

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.